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WIND AND WHIRLWIND

A

NOVEL.

BY

Mr. Thom. White.

NEW YORK:
G. P. PUTNAM & SON, 661 BROADWAY.
1868.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1868, by
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TO THE READER.

HAVING read several thousand novels,—some of which you, reader, have also read,—and having written three,—none of which you have read,—I feel at liberty to say a few words about "Wind and Whirlwind."

It would not be gentle modesty but soft simpleness, if I were to ask you to read a Story that I did not believe a good one; you will infer, therefore, that *I* consider this a good one;—and then you mildly suggest,—"But it is your child?" Quite true:—but as I am not idiotic, I can see if my child's nose is crooked or his head flat.

I can see that there are rough places in "Wind and Whirlwind," and abrupt descents, which may jar timid nerves; but of the fifty thousand who will attempt the reading, only five thousand will lay it down unfinished.

I believe it is not stupid. Is it more? Is it entertaining? Is it true?

Let me answer by repeating what two Critics said about it, and to my face! One was a woman, the other a man.

She:—"Wind and Whirlwind is a novel that cannot be put down unfinished; from the first page to the last the interest is maintained:"—

He:—"But the first part of it, certainly is shallow,"—

She:—"Consider that the story is purely American,—and how many shallow folk we have!"

He:—"Well, but the Irish folk,—are they not put in just for stuffing, so as to puff out the other characters?"

She:—"What, Mistress Mulloy?"

He:—"Yes, she's well enough: but the Juke?"

She:—"Oh, you don't like an Irish Duke?"

He:—"There never was such a thing!"

She:—"Possibly; but the novelist may invent?"

He:—"No, he must photograph nature;"—

She:—"No. I say he may and must invent."

He:—"Never!"

She:—"I say yes,"—

He:—"I say no,"—

She:—"Yes!"

He:—"No!"

She:—"Well, if you don't like Mistress Mulloy, what do you say to Mrs. Percival?"

He:—"Ah,—she?—that woman, she is a living creature from beginning to end. Compared with her, the other characters are mere puppets. She evolves herself to the reader, by her life, her thought, her feeling. She is worked out in the real style. She is a creation; she is so vital, so real, so detestable. She dominates the book, and is such a woman as I have never seen in literature, and hope I never shall see in life,"—

She:—"Gracious! You take away my breath. I did not think her so good nor so bad. *I* like Mistress Mulloy, and Luly, and Tom Bellows, and old Brigham, and—"

He:—"P-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-h-h-h-h-h!!"

She:—"O, you are quite ridiculous!"

Some signs of temper appearing I turned the subject, especially as they were going on regardless of my sensitive nature.

As to the Author:

The Press suggests that the following writers are, or have been, mining in the golden sands of Fiction:—

Mr. Higginson, Mr. Curtis, Bishop Clarke, Mr. Greeley, Dr. Hammond, Senator Drake, General Lee:—Also—Miss Dickinson, Mrs. Little, Mrs. Lowell, Mrs. Carson, Miss Field, Miss Stowe, Miss Bross, Mrs. Paul, Mrs. Moulton, Mrs. Sherwood, Mrs. Murray, Miss Putnam, Miss Terry, Mrs. Levert, "Beulah," and "Gail Hamilton."

Any and all are capable of writing a charming Novel, and until we hear from them, the reader may have the satisfaction of believing that any of them did write "Wind and Whirlwind."

T. W.

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CHARACTERS REPRESENTED.

Tom Bellows, a citizen of Jersey.
Mr. Edward Percival, a New York merchant.
Mrs. Edward Percival, born Matilda Staunton.
Mister Tobbots, a man-servant.
Sarah Eustis, a dead woman.
Luly, a lost child.
Misthress Mulloy, an Irish American.
The Juke of Milan, a musician.
Jerryco, a monkey.
Brit, a dog.
Sol Brigham, Jake, and others, } Citizens of Milford.
Mr. Dubois Templeton, Mr. Albert Redfield, } Men about town.

Wind and Whirlwind.

I.

A WEARY WALK.

In a wet drizzling day of December, a worn woman, leading a little girl, made her way slowly through the red muddy roads which mark the beautiful State of New Jersey. The woman was yet young, and was still pleasing, though her face was wan and thin and bitter with suffering. The child was a little girl, some three years old, who marched on by her mother's side uncomplainingly; her blue eyes now and then looking out of her round face at her mother, from whom she received no answering smile.

Why was it? Ah, that worn woman was but a wreck of herself; upon the fair body and the once kind soul, treachery and neglect and scorn had done their work, and now she was taking her last walk through the slippery mud in search of something—was it the father of her child? A great city is a dreary place to such as she; and it is dismal hunting in such a forest to find a man; for many men are wise as serpents, though not harmless as doves.

"Mammy," said the child, "is it warm in heaven?"

"My darling, my darling,—would to God we were there!"

"We shall get there some day, mammy. Are we going there now?"

The mother's face worked with suppressed pain,—but she made no answer.

"Shall I have new shoes and stockings when I get there?" asked the child. "Will God give me new shoes and stockings? My feet are *so* cold."

The poor mother took her in her arms and pressed her to her heart; and a tear fell from the hard dry eyes upon the wondering face.

"Luly," said the mother with broken voice,—"God in heaven keep you is your mother's prayer, and give you all good things. Here what will come He knows. To heaven you will go, but will your poor mother meet you? Oh good, kind Jesus"—she turned her face upward—"let me live a little longer for my baby! I cannot, cannot leave her!"

The two were sitting on a stone by the road-side, they two alone in this bitter cold. A wagoner was driving his load of potatoes and cabbages to market, through the Jersey mud. On the seat beside him lay his companion and friend, whom he now and then talked to.

"Now Brit—what you thinkin' on, eh? Had a tussel with that dumd 'Yankee Pluck' over the crik, eh? Chaw 'em up, eh? Love your master, eh?"

To all of which the grim face of the grimmest bull-terrier would give a side-look of satisfaction, and the stump of his tail would wag a gentle "yes." They

were friends, this man and this dog, and Brit loved Tom Bellows with a fidelity and faith such as no man and no woman would ever give. He asked no questions.

What was his name? I will tell you. Tom called him "Brit," because his neighbor over the creek had another bull-terrier as grim and savage as his, which he called "Pluck." Now Tom was a stanch American, and loved the British no more than he loved a bear, but his dog and his neighbor's dog were always at a fight, and as "Pluck" meant "Yankee Pluck," Tom's dog, "Brit," meant "British Bottom," and that was the way that it came about. It was only an expression of Tom's "contrairyness," and hatred of another dog that bullied his dog.

"Brit" never shut but one eye and could rarely open more than one, as one was sure to be closed tight by the teeth of "Pluck"; but with that one open eye he saw everything that a dog ought to see, and especially any dog that was "spilin'" for a fight. Now, no dog was busier at his business than Brit, and before his master could get his slower mind awake, Brit would dart off the seat and mount any dog, no matter how big, daring him to combat. Sometimes Tom could whistle him back—not always; and then Brit would seem quite ashamed and penitent.

"Now Brit," Tom would say, "what *is* the use a doin' so? Fight when you haf-to, and fight like the devil; but when you haf-ent, its no kind o' use, jest pure cussedness and nonsense. What's the use of eddication and keepin' the sabba-day if you're goin' to do so?

How many times I've sung the hym to you beginning—

"Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
For God hath made them so."

What's the use o' that? And you goin' at every poor critter along the road that never's heerd a hym, or knows the sabba-day from any other day. Have n't I always shet you up sabba-days, and give you good vittal, that you must go pitchin'-in this way and gettin' your face chawed-up so that I shall never get your pictur took, eh? Don't you know you're a poor miserable dog, Brit, eh?"

At such times the dog did not look into Tom's face, nor did he wag his stumpy tail—not he. He knew well enough what Tom was saying. He knew it, and he knew too who were good people and who were not; and now he cocked-up one of his short ears and stood on his forelegs, and looked out at the two poor figures who were sitting on the stone by the road-side; but he did not bark, nor make any grumbling sounds. No, he looked at them, and then he looked up into Tom's face.

"Well," said Tom to him, "I see 'em. They're good folks. I guess so, and we'll give 'em a lift, you and I, eh?"

Then Brit's tail wagged. Tom drew up his horses.

"Come, now, don't set there on the cold stone. Git in, and bring the little 'un. I'll give ye a lift. Come, my lady."

His voice was cheery, and hopeful, and irresistible.

The child smiled at his broad, honest face; and the mother, if she did not smile, murmured her thanks.

"Doggy, pretty doggy," said the little one, putting her hand in his open mouth—"pretty doggy."

Tom was pleased with this flattery, and so was Brit, for Brit had never been called "pretty" before.

"There," said Tom, as he covered them with his blankets, "that's better than trampin' through Jersey mud, a dum sight. It's my notion there ain't no mud equal to Jersey mud; and if Jersey's proud on't, I'm willin'. We don't have no such mud where I come from; but I will say this, we can't grow cabbages like these 'ere—twenty pounders, if they weigh an ounce."

His voice was like the warmth of a good blazing fire, and both mother and child revived.

"Where do you come from now?" he asked, more from sympathy than curiosity.

"From the west'ard," murmured the woman, evasively, for she had no story to tell.

"West'ard, eh? Wal, that's a good ways from here —some'her towards sundown, mebby? But they say it's a nice country, and the wheat there beats all. I heerd a man from there tellin' that there was miles and miles on 't, a wavin' in the wind like a yellow sea. Wal, now, I've half a notion to go out there myself. I'm dum tired wadin' round in this mud tryin' to feed them folks in York. It beats all natur how much they eat; but the dumdest thing is that *we* can't get the money; so many fellers have to live out of *us* that we don't get more'n half what the vittals bring. So," he said, turning to the woman, "you're goin' to try York?

Wal, some like it; but, plague on 'em, they're in such a tearin' hurry you can't hardly make a trade with em,—jest up and off like a flash, before a feller knows whether he wants to take ninepence or not. No kind o' use bein' in such a tearin' hurry. Are you in a great hurry to get there? I should guess not,"—looking at the woman. "By George! they're asleep, both on 'em; that's good. But what a dumd old world anyway. Like as not some cuss has been actin' bad with her. There's no knowin' what a man will do with a woman, nor what a woman will let him. Now, I've thought o' marrying one of 'em many a time; but they act like such dumd fools about it, so I never did. If one of 'em *would* stand still and hear a feller talk it out; but no, they whisk off to some other feller before you can say Jackrobison. Now, this little widder here," he thought to himself, "who knows but what she'd like a man to see after her, and provide the vittal? She looks kind o' starved though, but the little 'un *is* pretty. I should like such a little 'un to set on my knee nights; a room's kind o' bright with a little 'un in it ——"

In this sort of dream, with the sleeping woman and child beside him, the good wagoner made his way through the gas-lighted streets of Jersey City to the ferry.

II.

I MUST GO.

NATURE asserted herself, and neither child nor mother waked until the wagoner had crossed the ferry, and halted his wagon at the sidewalk of Washington Market. Then the woman woke with a start, and was bewildered with the strangeness.

"Where am I?—What's this?—Eh? Where am I? Oh, my God!"

"Why, Missus, here you are in the great city of New York; and a pretty lively place it is."

"Oh, let me get down! Here, baby—take her, take her."

"Better stay in the wagon," said the good-tempered Tom Bellows; for he had a shrewd suspicion that the woman had no home to go to.

"No, no, no," she said quickly; "I *must* go."

He lifted her down, and put into her hand a dollar.

"No, no," she said hurriedly.

"Yes," persisted he; "it's dum stuff anyway, and won't stay in a man's pockets. Take it, take it; you'll want it more 'n Tom Bellows."

She took it in her hand in a sort of bewilderment.

"Where do you want to go, anyway?" asked Tom, kindly.

"Go! Oh, where, where shall I go?"

"Wal, I should say you'd better go to your home, or to some friend—eh? that's Tom Bellows's advice. But, Lord, what can a man do advisin' a woman?"

"Good-bye, good-bye," she said hastily; "you've been kind to me, God bless you."

He caught her as she was going away.

"Where are you going?"

"I—I am going to find Mr.—Mr. Edward Percival—Edward Percival. Where does he live?"

"Lord-'a-mercy; who knows where folks live in this great town? And the little un's name's Percyval too, I reckon?"

"Luly," answered the little one, looking into his face. He took her in his strong arms, and kissed her; and then the mother and child walked feebly away into the lonely city.

"Mister Edward Percyval?" said Tom to himself; "he's done it, blast him!—hum, hum. The little un's the strongest of the two. Lord, I wish I had 'em to my home, I do. Dum the thing, if I'd anybody to see after this load I'd run after 'em, and make 'em stay in the wagon. Mister Percyval, Mister Percyval—blast him!"

So the rough good-hearted Tom talked to himself, so he thought, but he knew nothing. Brit looked after them and let his tongue dribble out of his mouth; then he ran a few steps after them; then he wagged his tail; and then he looked back at his master; but on the whole he concluded to stay by the old friend.

III.

DEAD IN THE STREETS.

WHERE went the wanderers that cold wintry night? None but themselves knew; nor did they know. They wandered aimless; the mother's heart was dull and heavy with hopeless despair, weak with the waning breath of her life. But the child said at last,—

"Mammy, where's our bed? Ain't there any nice barns in this great town?"

"Hush, my pet, we shall find a place by and by."

But the child's eyes grew heavy, and her little limbs dragged behind her, and she stumbled so that she pulled her mother down; for neither were stronger than children. Then the woman took her in her arms and crept up some steps under the shelter of a projecting porch, and held the child tightly to her starved bosom, and moaned a last lullaby. The child slept sweetly; then the mother's eyes closed, and she saw a vision of beauty —a face with tender eyes looking down at her, and she heard a voice that whispered words of peace:

"Come, all ye weary and heavy laden, and *I* will give you rest."

Just above the head of the wanderer, was a small silver door-plate, upon which was engraved a name, that better eyes than hers might have read:—

EDWARD PERCIVAL,

it said as plain as a door-plate could speak; but she—she who had had that name on her lips a few hours before, who had hoped we know not what could she but find that name—was not to find it. It was upon the door of a fine house in Broadway, not far from the marble church called Grace. Was it the house of her friend, and would he know she was there? And would he take her in, and warm and comfort her? The carts began to rattle through the cold and deserted streets, the gray light waxed into morning, the clocks tolled out seven, the milkmen gave their hideous whoops to wake the drowsy maids, and then there was a stir and sound of life in the house of Edward Percival. But they who sat at his door waiting, waiting, made no sign, made no motion. Why do they not wake and read that name, and ring the bell, and go in and be warmed and fed and comforted?

No, no,—they remain still and silent, the child sleeping in the mother's arms.

But Mr. Percival's is a first-class mansion; for if anything stamps a house as great, a man-servant stamps it so. This man-servant is an Englishman, and values his blood and breeding. It is high time for him to have the house to rights, and to see to the steps. He unchains the bolts, he turns the key, he opens the door, and there sits a miserable creature with a child in her arms. Mr. Tobbots has seen such sights in the streets of "merrie England," and is not dismayed. Still the mother and child move not, and the gorge of Tobbots rises;—

"Come now—bove on; What! Come, up with ye—bove on! Can't stop 'ere all day—Get along, will ye?"

Mr. Tobbots is seriously displeased at such indifference to his commands, and he seizes the woman's arm roughly; but he drops it and starts backward. The arm drops limp and the head falls, and the jaw opens.

"Gadamighty—she's dead!"

For a moment Tobbots is dismayed; but he recovers his presence of mind, and shouts across the street, "P'lice, p'lice, p'lice! 'ere! come hover—hinstantly!—'Ere's a woman dead, come hinstantly!"

The policeman comes, and others come; what few are on the street gather as they always gather to a hideous sight.

"Dead she is," says the policeman, "sure enough; but the child, she is'nt dead. Do they belong to the house?"

"'Ouse! such rubbidge! Take 'em away hinstantly, before my master comes down; take 'em away!"

The little girl looked up at the policeman as she clung around the neck of her dead mother, and something whispered to her that he had not a hard heart. She was easily raised in his arms, and others raised the mother and bore her away. Where should they go but to the police-station? No friends nor kinsfolk stood ready to drop a tear over the poor body that had once enjoyed and loved—loved, perhaps, too well rather than wisely. No friends or kinsfolk were at hand to smooth the limbs of that once fair body, or to soften the lines of that once fair face into the gentle repose of death. No. She must go to the hands of strangers and be buried, if buried at all, without love, without mourning. But in the police-house gathered a motley crowd

to see what they might. Death is always startling, and death in the streets is more startling than on the battle-field. So, curious eyes were looking on and wondering.

"*A woman and a child,*" said the police sergeant, writing, "and both dead ——"

"No," said a policeman; "one dead."

"One dead; which one dead?"

"The woman."

"*One dead, the woman,*"—writing. "What's her name?"

"Don't know."

"No letters, nor nothing about her?"

"Nothing but this gold locket and chain, as we can see; and that has on it some letters; I can't just make 'em out; looks like S. E. E. P., or something."

"Let me put that down—*S. E. E. P.*—there. Well, the woman must be buried; and the child—what shall we do with her, eh?" He spoke coolly, for policemen get used to these things in all Christian countries.

The little girl was still in the policeman's arms, clinging round his neck, for he was now the only friend she had in this world.

"Poor-house, I suppose."

"I'll take her," said a rich, full voice, in which there was a flavor of old Ireland.

"I'll take her, plase ye; for what's the differ one more or less? I'll take her."

The little one *felt* the voice, for it was kind if coarse; and she looked at a stout, round-faced woman, who stepped forward to the sergeant. How was she dressed?

Well, she wore—not a light blue moire-antique, trimmed at the corsage with white Valenciennes lace, with puffed sleeves adorned with embroideries of white in exquisite design, nor had she on her head a coronet brilliant with diamonds and pearls; nor were her dainty hands covered with gems curiously set in antique patterns—not at all. She wore a brown calico frock, ornamented with a small sprig which looked like a daisy; around her ample shoulders was carelessly thrown a plain woollen shawl from the Bay State Mills, which had about it the associations of age; her hair was *negligée*, and fell over her ears and neck with a grace peculiarly its own; her hands were strong, if not white, and through her eyes shone out a *generous soul.*

"Eh?" asked the sergeant, "*You* will take her?"

"That I will."

"You want her?"

"Of coorse I do. Why would 'ent I?"

"Are you good people? What is your family?"

"Famely? Sure I am. I belong to the ould family of Mulloy, of Connemara, who came over wid the Conqueror himself from the beautiful Itelly, where the blessed Virgin was born"—crossing herself—"and what more would ye?"

"I mean, my woman, are you good people? Do you live well?"

"Live well, is it? I shu'd think we did that—meat and petaties three times a day, and sugar and tay when its quite convanient. Is that livin' well, eh?" She laughed a little, and the sergeant laughed too; and the

cold face of the dead woman almost rippled into a warm smile at the warm, hearty spirit which now pervaded the room.

"You're married?" asked the sergeant.

"It's true I am. I'm not denyin' it."

"Who is your husband?"

"Who? The Juke ——"

"The Duke? And who is the Duke?"

"Who is he?" Again she broke into a broad smile. "The Juke is the Juke of Melan; and he plays the lovely tchunes at the houses of the grand people; and Jerryco goes wid him, and they have a beautiful time wid themselves and the music."

"Why do you call him the Duke?" asked the sergeant, amused at the woman's story.

"Why is it? Because he's the Musician, sure, and he comes from Melan, where the best music is made; and where else should he come from? And that's the reason he's the Juke!"

"Then he's the Irish Duke of Milan; is that it?"

"Ye may say that, and niver tell a lie."

"And you think he wants you to take this little child home?"

"Why should'ent he? Can a man get a babby every day, jist for the askin'? A pretty Juke he'd be not to have a babby when he could, widout goin' through the formalety! Ye may believe that! The formalety is a sarious business, ye may be sure."

"Well," said the sergeant, "you seem to be a good woman; we'll let you have the child—for the present at least. What is your name?"

"What are ye askin' after, when I said it was Mulloy?"

"But your other name—your Christian name?"

"Is it the Christean name? The Priest of Ballyraddock will tell you its Marg'rit, if he answers the question; and ye may put it down Misthress Garret Mulloy, and ye'll tell the truth for once."

She continued:

"You'll let me have the bits o' things, and the baubee of goold that has the letters on it, jist to remember by?"

The sergeant consented, and the little one was carried to the street from her dead mother, in the arms of the policeman, to whom she now clung.

Then she put her arms around the strong neck of her new mother; children sometimes have such faith—beautiful, is it not?

IV.

MR. EDWARD PERCIVAL.

Mr. Edward Percival and his elegant wife lived in the fine house, the steps of which we have seen, quite alone; for they had no child, and no poor relations to hang about them. They were greatly blessed, so people thought—for Mr. Percival had inherited a fine fortune and a fine tea business; and he had good looks, and no poor relations, to plague him at least; and his father was dead! and what more could a man want?

His front steps were now nicely swept off and no "rubbidge" encumbered them, and his halls were swept and garnished, and his breakfast table was set out in his well carpeted room, where a warm sea-coal fire blazed out a warm welcome; on the walls were pictures, and on the shelves were books, and in the windows were flowers; but it was very silent there, it was silent everywhere; there were no sounds of laughter, no shouts, no childish babblings—for there was no child in that house. There was every thing else, but no child. And yet only an hour or two ago, a dear little girl had lain at the door of that house in the arms of her dead mother, without a home, without a friend. Would the master of that house have been her friend? Would he have given her a home had he known it?

It was near nine o'clock when the master appeared in his breakfast room. He wore a silk-lined dressing gown, and a large seal ring on his finger, and looked like a gentleman, as he was. His hair was brushed back to show a fine forehead and a well-cut face. But perhaps in that face were lines which told of pride and disappointment, and unsatisfied desires—perhaps so.

He sat by the fire and looked over his newspaper listlessly. In a few moments he was followed by a tall well-dressed lady. She glided into the room and took her place at the table and rang the bell.

"Tobbots, breakfast"—that was all.

She was handsome, though pale; she glanced at her husband anxiously, but said nothing, while he looked over his paper. A few words will tell all we need to know of her now. Matilda Staunton had been one of those beautiful New York girls who make their way by beauty and a determination to please. Her family was good enough—as good as any, and there once had been money in it, which had disappeared before she came into being. But she inherited a kind of flavor of fortune which helped her in the start of life.

There was one thing and but one for her to do—to marry money; that, her parents knew, if she did not.

She married money, but she had also married a man much above the common run. Hers was a brilliant match, and nobody was more envied than Matilda Staunton when she stood at the altar of Grace Church, and gave her hand to Edward Percival. She now had beauty, she had position, she had a carriage, she had a diamond ring and an Indian shawl, she had Parisian

bonnets and Parisian gloves, she had a dog and a parrot—*but she had no child.* And that was why this house was so silent; that was why there were some lines of disappointment in the face of Edward Percival; that was why there was a chilly air about the house in spite of carpets and coal.

"Matilda, my dear," he began, "I can't go to any more of these Receptions."

"Can't go, Edward! And why not? If we don't go to them, what *can* we do? We shall be nobodies."

"It may be all very well for you, my dear," he said. "You may manage to get something out of them, but by Jove, to be obliged to stand round until two or three o'clock o'night talking cotton with stupid men, or else mincing with one's front teeth to a parcel of stupid women, by Jove it's too much."

"It's very stupid here at home alone," she ventured to say.

"Well, perhaps it is; but that's not anybody's fault as I see. If we had a house full of boys and girls, they would 'liven us to be sure; but we have'nt, and we may as well say no more about it."

She rose from her seat and came to the chair and put her arms around his neck and kissed his forehead—"Oh, Edward I am so sorry, *so* sorry."

She loved him as much as it was in her nature to love anybody; but she had a passionate desire *that he should love her*, and as she *felt* rather than knew that his love was fading, in his disappointment, so slowly as to be imperceptible to all but her, her heart became more and more craving, until, as we shall see by and by, it

becomes a passion mastering her whole nature. They were still young, not thirty, these two, and yet life was beginning to lose its glamour and to seem very real.

They sat at their ample breakfast; she at her end of the table, he at his,—but they wanted little; they did not attack the good things with the vigor which hunger gives,—not at all. They picked a little, and said a few commonplace things, and tried to "converse," but it was up-hill work. As Mrs. Percival had said, it really did seem stupid to be here at home alone.

Near her stood the rigid and stately figure of Tobbots; his arms worked like an automaton as his waiter went under the cup, and his legs worked like an automaton as he moved it around to the Master; and the same mechanical motions were gone through as he got the chicken to the Mistress. There he stood rigid in his uprightness, and his face was like wood. Oh, he was a model waiter—but was he really a man?

Suddenly Mr. Percival seemed to remember that some noise or confusion had ascended from the front door.

"Tobbots, what was the fuss at the door this morning?"

"Honly a dead woman and child, my Lord." Tobbots loved to make this mistake—"My Lord" sounded so much better than "Sir."

"Honly a dead woman and child, Sir."

"What! exclaimed Mrs Percival, shocked"—a woman and child both dead on our steps!—Oh! Edward!"

"Ho no! my Lady," said Tobbots soothingly—"not both dead, ho no."

"Well, how was it, Tobbots?" asked Mr. Percival.

"Honly a dead woman, Sir—honly a dead *woman*."

"Well, what has become of the child?" asked the wife.

"I had them removed hinstantly. I could not have them there—so disgusting, my Lady."

"Removed? Where to?"

"The p'lice came and I directed them to remove them hinstantly, and they did, Sir."

Did it flit through the brain of Mr. Percival, that this child might have been a blessing had it remained at his door, had it entered it, and grown up about his heart? It is not possible to know. He only said,—

"I wish I could have see them," as if to himself.

"Ho, Sir," said Tobbots, "they were honly the lower classes."

"Lower classes! Good heavens! Edward. Are there lower classes who die about on one's steps in this way?" asked Mrs. Percival.

"It seems so, my dear."

They ate on in silence, these two, and Mr. Tobbots waited in silence. It was not a jovial meal.

"I wish I could have seen it," said Mr. Percival at last.

"Seen what, my dear?" asked his wife.

"The child."

She rallied him, and tried to laugh him out of such a fancy.

"Why, it must have been a mere beggar's child, Edward; surely you would not—I mean—what interest could you have had in the child of a beggar who dies in

the streets? It is shocking, to be sure; but it would be of no use for *us* to try to do anything for such people."

"No use!" broke in Mr. Percival, "not a bit of use; nor can I see of what use we are to anybody, if it comes to that." He spoke sarcastically, and it was the tone, and not the words, which gave his wife a pang. *She* longed to be of use to this man whom she had married, and she was ready to do all, and to attempt all, to secure and keep *his* love. She did not love him as girls do in novels; not a particle of such love was in her heart. Not a fresh, spontaneous, outpouring of feeling which she must express, and which no man can resist, ever came from her; but she had a conscientious desire to do her duty. Good heavens! what was her duty? Neither she nor anybody knew. Was it to go out and look up this little waif that had floated to her shore? Was she to wash it, and tend it, and love it as a mother should? This child that now had no mother in the world, was she to find love, and tenderness, and care in this elegant woman, the wife of the rich Edward Percival, who had no child to love, and would never have one? Was this little Luly—this waif stranded after one of the bitter storms of life, was she to be the sunshine to warm into life in this house the flower of love? Might she not, at least, unite these two lives, now in danger of divergence, into one?

Almost she had put her little hands upon them and blessed them—almost. But some spiteful fate had interposed Mr. Tobbots, and the receding wave had washed the child away into the open sea of life.

"I wish I had seen it," again sighed Mr. Percival.

"Why, Edward, how ridiculous! Suppose you had seen it, you could have done nothing. It's quite ridiculous to be thinking about it."

"Quite so," was the only answer he was inclined to make. Mr. Percival, in the two short years he had been married, had almost learned the lesson which married men and women are so slow to learn, that argument with the partner of one's bosom is most unwise, and is pretty sure to lead to mischief.

The unusual incident of a dead woman and child being found on his door-step, wakened an unusual sense of the deprivation under which his life was being passed. What had he to live for, what purpose in getting more money? What could he do with it?—to whom leave it, when in the course of years death should come?

And then, too, there was a secret of his heart which he had never told his wife; why should he? For it was not one which would create in her just heart a new or profound love.

But an event of this kind, so strange and startling, excited his mind, and he could see a vision of a fair young girl whom he had once loved, or fancied he had; who had once loved him with all her heart and soul, as young and simple girls sometimes do. He remembered how he was once a gay and reckless young fellow, spending his months among the mountains of Pennsylvania, and how he had there met Sarah Eustis, and how she had pleased his fancy; how he had grown to be a sort of "Admirable Crichton" in her simple eyes, which rarely saw a gay young man, and never one so handsome, so gay, so rich as he.

It was a youthful fancy, and why should it come up again now, when he had almost forgotten it, and tried to believe she too had forgotten it as easily? He wondered—wondered whether she had ever had a child, whether she had forgotten him, whether she were married; and then the dead woman and her child on his door-step haunted him; he wished he had seen them. Certainly it was ridiculous, as his wife had said; for if he had seen them, would he have mourned for the dead mother, and would he have taken the lonely little waif in his arms, and loved it as his own? It was ridiculous, quite so.

He ate in silence, and went silently away—to plunge into his ledgers, to distract his thought and drown these foolish fancies in his ships, and sugars and teas. It was not so easy. The dead woman haunted him; and the face of Sarah Eustis rose before him, pale and suffering.

V.

MISTHRESS MULLOY.

HIGH up in an old, but not aristocratic mansion, in Mott's court, lived Misthress Mulloy. It suited her business, this top story. "For," said she, "how shu'd I dry the clothes nate and clane, but that the good providence of God has provided beautiful roofs to dry them on; and there it is; and will ye tell me there's no providence of God about it at all? I'll not believe it! And the blessed Virgin herself, *she* had a roof; and that's where it is (crossing herself) that her clothes were so white, dipped in the blood of the blessed Lamb. Never tell me about your back-yards and your green fields, and all the blathering stuff; give me a good dry roof and I'll engage to wash whiter and better than any of ye." That is the way Misthress Mulloy sometimes went on to her friends or rivals, who indulged in a little pardonable pride as to their first floors and bits o' yards back.

Into this upper floor near this beautiful roof she carried the lost child, cold and hungry as it now was. In the entry she had met a woman or a child, but she stopped to say no words. She hastened to her own rooms; she stripped off the poor, damp, cold clothes, and rolled the child in her own blanket, and laid her in

her own bed; and then she rubbed her feet, so that in a few minutes the poor wanderer fell into a soft and gentle sleep.

Now she made up her fire again, for it had been burning; the remains of a coarse breakfast were on the table; on the fire she put a small skillet, in which was some broth.

"That," said she, "shall be her breakfast when she wakes, bless her little heart!"

The child slept on until toward noon, when a scrambling and tugging was heard on the stairs, and the door of Misthress Mulloy's room was burst open by a dog and two boys. Around the dog's neck was a dirty cord, at which he was pulling, so that his eyes were starting from his head, and his tongue hanging from his mouth.

"Whist! will ye," said the woman, "do ye want to wake up the babby?"

"Baby!" said the oldest of the boys—some fourteen or fifteen years—"what baby? Whose baby?"

"*Mine*, ye blatherskites; can't ye be quite about it?"

"But where did it come from?" asked the youngest boy, whose name was Mike.

"Come from?" said his mother. "Ye may ask that, where did it come from? God A'mighty sent it, that's where it come from. But where did ye come from, wid yer dirty cur?—agh—look at him now tryin' to git in to the child—will ye! agh, get away wid ye!"

The dog smelled about until he came to the door of the inner room, at which he whined a little.

Let me say, that the two boys were the offspring of Misthress Mulloy, by a first and now blessed spouse;

they were not unlike boys who live in the back streets of New York; they had grown up as they best could so far, and while they were not thieves and rogues, they were a sort of vagabond which abounds in great cities. They ate what they could, and when they could, and where they could; and did what they could—not much though. It would have been the easiest thing in the world for them to have become first class scoundrels, but for the good influences of Misthress Mulloy; she saved them from perdition with her great heart and warm affections.

Of course they were ready to steal a dog—that they thought quite right; and the fact that a dog was prowling and snuffing in their court inspired them with an irresistible desire to steal him; why, no man can tell. For they had no use for a dog, and no place for a dog, and no love for a dog; nor had the dog any love for them; but they stole him, and he let them steal him. So now they three appeared in the decent room of Misthress Mulloy.

"He's an ugly baste anyway," said she.

The dog looked up at her appealingly, and wagged his tail. If the truth were told, it must be admitted that his ears were bitten off close to his head, and his face was marked and scarred with many a battle, and his pelt was no longer white nor clean—in fact he *was* ugly.

Jim was the oldest boy, and he now considered the dog his property; he spoke:—

"Ugly beast? and why do you say that now, when he didn't make himself, and can't defend himself?"

"True for you, Jim; but what did ye bring him in for, anyway?"

"Bring him in? Somebody must own him. He *must* be somebody's dog, and I've got no dog."

"True again. But what's the use of him at all?"

"Use of him? What's the use of anything? look at him now—look at his chist, and look at them legs, and look at them teeth now," opening his mouth and showing rows as white as ivory; "look at them! golly, can't he fight? Use of him!"

Just then a slight cry made Misthress Mulloy rush to the inner room, and in followed Jim and Mike, and the dog too.

"I'm *so* hungry," whimpered the child. In an instant Misthress Mulloy had her arms around her, lifting her from the bed, and in an instant the dog was beside her, licking the face of the child.

"Doggy, pretty doggy," said the child, just as she had said it once before.

"There," said Jim, "*she* knows."

This dog was Brit, who for some reason, best known to himself, had become lost in New York, and for some reason, known to nobody, had drifted into the fourth story of No.—— Mott street, and was now licking the face of little Luly, who was lost there too.

VI.

A BOY OR A GIRL.

WHERE was the "Juke?"

It was now dark of this winter evening, and the fire was burning in Misthress Mulloy's stove; on it was seething and steaming a boiling pot; near it was lying Brit with his head on his paws and one eye open; on a great broad lounge, used for a bed, the two boys were lying fast asleep; in a rocking-chair upon a feather cushion sat the ample form of Misthress Mulloy, crooning little songs to little Luly, as she lay wrapped in her arms.

In came a tall girl of nineteen, who went into the inner room and laid away her shawl; then came a shorter one of sixteen—one came from the shop, one from the factory—they earned their livings.

Misthress Mulloy held up a warning hand, so they stepped lightly. But little Luly was not asleep, though the mother thought so. They stepped lightly, but the little eyes of the little child saw them, and her little ears heard them, though she did not move; she was *taking in*, receiving her knowledge of life. Had she fallen among good people? Let us hope so.

The sound of a hand-organ was heard. The child listened. It came nearer, and nearer, and up the stairs,

and then it stopped, and Misthress Mulloy's door opened.

In the door stood a youngish man, wearing a tall steeple-crowned hat, a red vest, a velvet jacket with bright brass buttons, and breeches; and below all, his legs were swathed and bound in rags, such as brigands of the opera always wear. This was the "Juke."

On his shoulder sat a small wizen-faced monkey, dressed like his master. This was Jerryco.

"God bless all in this house," said the Juke, as he entered. He put his organ down; he took off his hat and threw it on the lounge, then he threw off a flowing black beard, then his tight jacket, then his brigand's legs—and now he appeared before you as Mike Mulloy, the child of the bog; with a bright blue eye, and a slightly grizzled beard.

"By the blessed Jasus," he exclaimed, "I'll spake Spanish no more this night."

"And how is the Juke?" she asked, wondering when he would see what she had in her arms.

"The Juke's gone to purgatory, bedad, an' let him stay there this night. Mike Mulloy's ready for his supper." Suddenly he saw the child in Misthress Mulloy's arms—"By the blessed Virgin, an' what is it?"

"What the blessed Virgin has sent us," said Misthress Mulloy; turning the child's face to the light of the fire.

"But it *is* a pretty one," said Mike, bending over her, "anyway. An' where did ye get it?"

"The blessed Virgin sent it,—that's the true of it,—and are ye glad thin? And why don't ye say it?

Is it a babby like that ye can git for the asking any Tchuesday?"

"Heh!" said the Juke surprised, and in a low tone—"Heh!" an' what is it now?"

"Guess thin, guess," said the Misthress in delight—"Guess thin!"

"A bye, then—a bye, eh?"

"No, no, no, Mike," much delighted with her secret; "guess agin, guess agin!"

"A gurl, thin, eh?"

"Ach!" reproachfully, "somebody's tould ye, Mike, somebody's tould ye! Ye niver guessed anything in twice afore, niver—Ach!"

Misthress Mulloy naturally was disgusted—for a minute only; while Mike was greatly pleased at the fact which he had discovered, as well as at his own sagacity in making the discovery.

The Juke kneeled down beside his wife, and looked into Luly's face; she was not afraid. Why should she be? Then he smoothed her hair and her cheek, and took her small soft hand in his large hard one; and then he kissed it with his large mouth, and so he made love to this little lost child, and she gave him love for love. But she did nothing and said nothing—*she felt;* and rayed forth a subtle essence, which he too felt.

Jerryco had jumped from his master's shoulder, to a perch which was his place over the single window, and there he sat looking down out of his queer whimsey of a face. Brit had discovered him, and was reaching up on his hind legs, to smell at this strange new creature; then he whined and prepared to spring.

"Blast the baste with thunder and lightning!" exclaimed the Juke, giving Brit a kick, which set him howling under the bed where the boys lay, now wide awake. They comforted Brit as they could, and made him understand that he was not to put his teeth into Jerryco.

"Black divils take him!" said the master of the house. "Whose dog is he at all?"

"Luly's dog," said the child, looking into his face. These were the first words she had said, and they were pleasant and soothing to his ear.

"Well, well, my little leddy, that's right; stick to yer friends, an' they'll stick to you. Eh? old woman, I'm ready for my supper, eh?"

"So am I," said Jim.

"And I," said Mike.

"So is Luly," said the little one.

Luly stood on the floor with her hand in that of the Juke, while Misthress Mulloy poured into a vast tin dish the Irish stew with all its savors and broths, which had been steaming in the pot. Down sat the Juke and the Misthress, and the girls and the boys; and the little lost one was in the Misthress's lap, and Jerryco with a spring sat upon the back of his master's chair, and Brit's mouth watered as the great wooden ladle divided the feast.

It was not much of a feast, but "better is a dinner of herbs where love is—" you know the rest. It was a more grateful and savory meal than Mr. Edward Percival's breakfast had been.

The supper was eaten, and the wreck was soon cleared away, for the hands were ready and willing.

"Now, father," said the girls, "let's have the music."

"O yes," chimed Luly.

The Juke put on his flowing black beard and his steeple-crowned hat, and took up his organ; and Jerryco came to help.

Then the Juke was himself again. And out of his box came the "Star Spangled Banner," and then "Wellington's March," and a bit from "Trovatore;" and then came a bright, gay movement like "The Campbells are Coming"—and in a minute Jim and Katty were dancing up and down; and Misthress Mulloy's feet were going while she held Luly's hand in hers; and Mike and Mary could not sit still; and Jerryco chattered, and Brit ran in and out. So it was a gay old time, and nobody was harmed—*and it rested them.*

VII.

MR. PERCIVAL GOES AWAY.

How went it in these next few years?

Money poured into the pockets of Mr. Edward Percival;—his ships made good voyages, and his ventures were productive, and his sugars sold well;—not that he was always lucky,—that is not permitted to mortal man; but he grew richer, and so was more admired by men, and women too. Was he the happier for it? Money has nothing to do with happiness, as everybody knows. He was happier for having an occupation which engaged his thoughts and used his energies;—but it did not satisfy his life; he had longings and capacities which mere business could not allay or engage. He made money, but he was not content. He plunged into business with more and more determination. He did not want money, he knew he had no use for it; but he did want occupation, and the only thing for him to do was to become a millionaire, and be courted for that by men and women. Did this engrossing pursuit increase his love for his wife? Not so. His house was not a gay house; he had little sunshine in it; he followed up in the evenings the thoughts of the day, and schemed more and more; his friends now were those who, like himself, were bent upon being millionaires, and together they plotted and planned in his library,

while Mrs. Percival sat alone in her dreary, lonely, elegant parlor, or went abroad alone in elegant clothes to elegant receptions, which bored while for the time they occupied her. The truth is, that in the kind of life Mr. Percival now laid out for himself, his wife was *not* a partner, and was not necessary to him. Any body who could keep his house would do as well,—or a mere housekeeper would have answered. The servants could have given him his meals. Husband and wife had now almost nothing in common. His life was in South street, hers in receptions and calls. He cared nothing about her pursuits, she nothing about his; and there were no children to unite their souls and thoughts into harmony.

But the house was a fine one, and the horses had cost two thousand dollars at least, and Mrs. Percival's dresses and laces were greatly admired; and both husband and wife were good-looking. Indeed, people envied them. Do you?

Matilda Staunton had not expected just this. She had thought that she was to be loved "for herself alone," as all young enthusiastic people do, and she did not wake up to it, that she had anything to *do* to make herself beloved, until later on. And yet she greatly desired the love and devotion of Edward Percival; and why should she not greatly desire it?

How she was to get it, that she did not know. It is not given to many women to be *fascinators*. Not the less, but the more perhaps, did she long to be one, or at least to be mistress of the heart of her husband; while only the few fascinators, and the many generous,

loving-hearted, ever are. She was not one of the few fascinators, nor one of the many generous, loving-hearted; and yet she wanted to be loved by one man at least.

"Matilda," said Mr. Percival one May morning in these years, "I shall be gone into Pennsylvania for about a week, and you must make yourself as comfortable as you can."

This business way of stating it pained her feelings; for it is one of the miseries of our ungenerous or non-generous natures to grow suspicious and morbid; but she did not deliberately become so, and she struggled against it.

"Why, Edward—why not take me with you? I like to go to Pennsylvania, I am sure."

"My dear"—married people say "my dear" when they mean to be in opposition—"my dear, it would be impossible for you to go. I shall travel nights, and the hotels in the neighborhood of the mines are very poor; you would have a horrid time."

"But, Edward, my dear, what is good enough for you is good enough for me."

"It's quite out of the question, my dear; I really could not take you to such a place."

"But why not, Edward? I don't see why not?"

It is certain that Mr. Percival did not tell Mrs. Percival why not; it is certain that he did not take her with him into that lovely country of wooded hills and grassy vales and rippling streams. Why?

Mrs. Percival did not know, but I do; and the reader shall know.

The dead woman and child on his steps in the bleak month of December had stirred a memory to its depths, and it did not subside into quiet and repose. The lonely, aimless life he led agitated the troubled waters more and more. His craving for the true and tender love of children, of a child, grew as he thought of the little wasted one who had no home, no friend, no father. It had not struck him at the moment, that he should have made that abandoned little creature his; should have loved it, and cared for it, and watched over it, like a father on earth—not at the moment; but by and by he had thought of it, and then he had made inquiries, only to be baffled. No one knew at the police-station where it had gone, and none cared. And then his wife had told him that it would be "ridiculous" for him to care for another person's child, and a beggar's child too; he felt that she might be right. "Ridiculous!" But again it came upon him, and, by and by, with irresistible power, that the destiny of that child was in some strange way bound up in his; and thus his soul was disturbed between two passions—that of getting money, and more money, and the finding that child and making it his. Then the memory of Sarah Eustis, whom he had once loved, or fancied he had, and who had once loved him, came rushing back upon him; and he wondered, and wondered, and wondered, whether she had a child or not, whether she had any one to love her; and in the long cold nights he waked up and thought of her, and became restless and wretched.

Mrs. Percival felt there was something—something between them, and it was like a bar of iron, but it was

impalpable; when she put out her hand it could touch nothing. But the delicate feelers of the soul felt it, and then she too began to wonder what these things meant; to wonder why she was not happy; to wonder why she could not or did not command his love and confidence. Would that little child have united them with hooks of steel? Would the love of a child have made *him love her?* Ah! how she longed that that might be; how she prayed that she might be blessed, as so many women are, who never think of it.

VIII.

ABOUT THE DOG.

WHERE did Edward Percival go, and what was his errand? He went by the railway as far as Paterson; there he walked the little town to find a stable, and he made a bargain for the use of a pair of horses and light wagon for a week or so. He determined to go pleasantly upon his errand whatever it was, and to find some solace in the green fields and woody roads for his disappointment and unrest. It was lovely weather, such as we have in the last of May, when on the earth is a blue haze-vail of beauty; when every tree and bush and blade of grass is full of life and promise; when every bird seeks his mate and tells his love with song; but Edward Percival was not in harmony with all this. He was in doubt, and he was chilled with the vague darkness of his life; he sang no songs. Along this road he drove, thinking of Sarah Eustis, and not dreaming that she had travelled it only a few short months before on *her* way to find *him*.

He had not gone five miles from Paterson, when, coming to a fork in the road, he was perplexed which to take, nor could he determine. But a strong team ploughing in the field approached the fence, and between the handles of the plough was a broad open-faced farmer.

"My good fellow"—city men who are rich are apt to use this most offensive and patronizing expression—"My good fellow, can you tell me which of these roads leads toward Rockaway and Newton?—

"Wal,—I can."

Mr Percival waited, but that was all the answer.

"Well, will you?"

The ploughman did not seem to be much overwhelmed with the rich Mr. Percival, not so much as the rich Mr. Percival thought was proper; he waited the reply.

"Yes, I will,—if you'll tell me what I want to know."

Well, what is it, my man?"

"Do you live in York?"

"Yes."

"Have you seen anything of a bull-terrier dog there anywhere round?"

If Mr. Percival had been in a good humor, he might have laughed at this simple question; but he was in no good humor, and he was impatient at it.

"Dog! Why, my man, there are a thousand dogs in the city; how should I know anything about your dog?"

"I did not say it *was* my dog. But anyway, you'd have know'd that dog, if you'd seen him once. His name was 'Brit' jest as plain as the nose on your face;—and he had jest the prettiest jaw and head you ever see on a dog,—yallerish-white with a spot over his eye;—You don't remember to have seen him, anywhere in the city?"

"No, my good fellow—impossible. But now tell me which of these roads I am to take—eh?"

"The right is the best;—*but about that dog*, if you

should see anything of him, jest take him up and let me know, Tom Bellows, Basset's cross-roads; eh, you'll remember that?" Mr. Percival drove on, when Tom shouted after him,—

"Heigh! do you know anything of a man in York called Percyval—eh? Percy-val?" with a strong emphasis.

Mr. Percival did not stop to gratify this curiosity, but drove on the faster to make up his lost time.

"Jest like 'em," said Tom to himself. "They are the dumdest fellers, can't stop a minit. I vow, I should like to find that air dog and that air Percyval."

He turned his horses in the furrow as Mr. Percival disappeared up the road.

After three days of pleasant journey through a pleasant, varied country, Mr. Percival passed the mountains at Culvers gap, and reached Milford, a beautiful rural town on the banks of the broken and swirling Delaware. He did not go farther, as it was nightfall and he could here discover what he wanted to know.

The fine, hearty, homely, comfortable old country tavern is now supplanted, all over these United States, by the more pretentious, expensive, and comfortless hotel. But in Milford "Brigham's" still holds its own, or did a few years back. Mr. Percival was not known at it, because when he had spent his summer fishing about here four years ago, he had stayed at a farm-house some three miles from the town. But he thought it best to write his name in the books—"E. Percy, New York." Why did he do that? Was he afraid or ashamed of his name?

After his supper, which he had eaten alone and in silence, he sat down to smoke a cigar in the sanded-floored bar-room. It was a soft, pleasant night, and the windows were open, so that it was easy to hear what the gossips, who love to sit about taverns, were saying.

"It's no sort o' use," said one; "when luck 's running agin' a man, he can't do a thing; he may as well turn tail and run too."

"But where'll he run to, if he does that?" said Brigham, in his hearty voice. "Where'll he run to, but to the devil? Nonsense!"

"I tell you 'tis," said the other persistently, "it's just as I say. I've seen it a hundred times if I've seen it once; when a man gets going down hill, by George, everything seems kind o' pushin' him. It's a dum sight easier to row with the stream, I tell you."

"Nonsense, Jake," said Brigham. "'Tain't much of a concern anyway, this world ain't; but if a man's boat is being swep' down the fall, do you want to pull that way so as to have it go faster? No, I say pull agin the stream like thunder, get ashore if you can and start agin—that's my doctrine."

The assent of the listeners sided with Brigham. But Jake was not discouraged this time at least; he pulled against the stream.

"But now, Brigham, jest look at it. Here's these Eustises:—they could'nt get along nohow. I remember, and you do too, when old Eustis had as fine a farm as there was in the valley, and as many yoke of cattle, and as fine a drove of cows as you could see; and there

wasn't a finer dairy turned out than Miss Eustis made; and that gal of his was as pretty and peert as any one you'd see within twenty mile; and then Tom was a real smart boy, and there was'nt a better runner in the country; and when the old man put him into Squire Bostwick's office, everybody said he'd make a smart lawyer certain. And now where are they? First come that stallion—cost the old man a thousand dollars—he up and died; then his biggest barn burnt down; then his wife had the jaunders, and she died; and then that gal, as pretty and nice a one as there was, went to the bad; and Tom's nothing but a poor gamblin,' drinkin' fellow; and now worse than all, the old man's sold out and gone off to Genesee with the two little uns, without a 'red.' That's what I call going down with a run. Eh, Brigham, what you got to say to that?"

"Say? I'll say this—that Eustis has got to be an old man; and I'll say this too, that when a man's heart's broke that's the end on him; that's what I've got to say. Ever since the day that that daughter of his went wrong and had that child, since that day the old man's heart was broke, and he never held up his head; and that's what set Tom to drinking so, I say. And I say more, 'blast the fellow that did it into ten thousand pieces!' that's what I've got to say."

The old fellow struck the railing against which he leaned with his fist so that the piazza shook again. For a few moments there was silence, such as follows a stout thunder-clap.

Edward Percival heard all this; his cigar died in his mouth, his hands grasped the sides of his chair, his

limbs grew cold, his heart beat slowly—and he did not get up and go out and kill himself.

After a pause, one asked, "What has become of the girl?"

"Dead, likely; nobody has ever heard of her since she went off."

"Who *was* the cussed fool, anyway?"

"Nobody knows, the girl would never tell; not a whimper did she make. She just went off, and that's the last of her; and I'll say this," said Brigham, "I'll say this, that if there is a hell, that fellow 'll get the hottest place in it, and deserve it too, and I'll pile on the brimstone; that's what *I* say!"

"Good for you, old Brig.!" Jake shouted; "pile it on, and by George! I'll use the bellows to make her blaze."

They all had a good hearty haw, haw, at the vehemence of old Brigham. But he who sat inside the window did not laugh; he did not even smile, he did not move. Was he, then, such a "cussed fool," and infernal scoundrel, as these rough men thought him? He, so elegant, so cultivated, so refined, so rich? He had not dreamed it. Most thoughtless, most reckless, most selfish, most sensual, he had been; but, ah me! he had not counted the cost *to her*, nor to himself. He had not expected such dire mischief, such heart-devotion, such heart-breaking, such ruin, such desolation, such despair. But the whirlwind has sprung from the little wind he had blown with the breath of his mouth. Such fools may men be, even when not daringly wicked, and such ruin may such folly bring.

IX.

A STONE UNDER HIS JACKET.

"MR. E. PERCY" could not move. He sat rigid; the dead cigar dropped from his mouth down his clean white shirt bosom, and sprinkled it with ashes; the dim tallow candle, which burned on the bar-counter, just shone upon the pale face; the hearty fellows outside neither knew nor cared for him, but they talked on in a lower tone, and presently one came straggling into the bar-room from the street, and lighted his cigar at the tallow candle. He was young but seedy, and he had not the air of an honest gentleman; his hat was shabby, and was worn on the side of his head, and over his eye; his trowsers were stuck into his boots, which showed no signs of the brush; he carried a cane and affected a jaunty air, as though he had not abandoned hope; but his face, though not brutal, wore a dissipated, reckless look, which told the story. He was not an honest, straight-forward young man who meant to *work*. No, he lived by his wits, and he made a poor thing of it too; that was plain.

This kind of man gets a little shaky by nine o'clock in the evening, but his eye was yet awake, and as he

puffed at his cigar, he gave one glance at the motionless man; it caused him to start.—Why? Had he seen him before? Mr. Percy did not look up, his head rested on his breast and his eyes saw nothing. The seedy young fellow gave one more glance and quickly went out.

"Eh, Tom," said Jake, "where you goin'? Got a' 'gagement, I s'pose?"

"To bed, to bed, where all good men go. Don't you hear the clock?"

"Good night."

"Good night."

"That fellow 'll play cards 'till daylight, if he can find any fool to play with him," said Brigham.

"I don't know," said Jake; "I feel kind o' sorry for Tom Eustis. He ain't a bad fellow, but he'll come to no good. And yet it ain't all his fault. He's an angel 'longside the other fellow. By George, if I had the makin' of a world, I'd put such fellows as Tom master over the other sort of fellows; and one of 'em would haf' to toe the mark."

"It's not much of a concern *anyway*, this world ain't!" said Mr. Brigham, with emphasis. "Tom Eustis don't *want* to be a poor devil, but he will be. He won't work, he knows there's a kind o' disgrace hanging over him like a cloud, and he was proud as Lucifer. It is pretty well out of him when he comes to borrow a quarter of me now and then. It's not much of a concern anyway, this world ain't—that's what *I* say."

When Brigham moved they all moved, for he was cock of the walk here. He came into the bar-room,

and the rest scattered to their various and modest mansions in the good old town of Milford on the Delaware.

Mr. Percy sat in his chair very still.

"Well, sir," said Brigham, in his hearty landlord's voice, "getting sleepy? Bed's ready, maybe you're ready for it. Sleepy work riding about alone. Always go to sleep myself after a day's ride. What do you say, eh?

Then Mr. Percival roused himself and got up. "I'll go," was all he said.

The landlord took the tallow candle and showed him the way to his room. Percival followed and said nothing.

"There," said Brigham, drawing the curtain—there's your bed, and a good one it is too; live geese-feathers, every one; and my old woman plucked them. Hope you'll sleep well, eh?"

As he went out of the room Mr. Percival recalled him.

"What time did you say the sun rose?"

"Well, I didn't say, but it do rise nigh on to five, now; the days are getting long."

Mr. Percival seemed to reflect a moment—"Could I start then?"

"You could, I'll say that, you could; but it's early to get breakfast and all."

"No matter, no matter," said Percival quickly, "I don't care for breakfast."

"Don't care! Good Lord!" exclaimed Brigham at such shocking folly. "It's not much of a concern anyway—this world ain't; but without breakfast! I wouldn't try to keep the old thing agoing, *I* wouldn't."

Perhaps it was lucky that Brigham always got *his* breakfast, and so "kept the old thing agoing." It was agreed that Mr. Percy should have his horses and start the next morning at five.

"But you ain't seen much of our town; there's the Academy and the burying-ground, and the iron foundry, and the rake-factory; we count there ain't no finer rakes made than old Milford can turn out, that's what *I* say." He never thought to name the works of God; he said nothing of the beautiful waters, and the wooded hills, and the warm grassy valleys, and the pleasant farms, and the noble trees which were scattered out of Creation's hand all over this fine State. But old Brigham was a pretty good sample of this world, which, according to him, was "not much of a concern anyway;" and this was his way of valuing what he saw in it.

Mr. Edward Percival did not sleep so well as little Luly did that night; and when he did sleep it was but fitfully. He saw again and again the face of Sarah Eustis, but it was a dead face; and he waked with a start to find himself alone in this strange room. He groaned in spirit and in deed—"Good God! Must I be haunted, haunted, haunted, evermore!"

Brigham slept like a top and waked with a snort, punctually at half past four. He was up and dressed in five minutes thirty-six seconds, was down to see about that breakfast and those horses. But his guest ate little; an egg and a bit of bread and a little tea sufficed.

"I ride better, *I* do," said the landlord "with my insides packed pretty close. A man's innards rattle about, and first you know you 're sore and spleeny."

He had small respect for a man who didn't eat his rations. "You pay just the same, little or much, and *I* say, take your share; that's the doctrine in such a concern as this; tain't much of a world anyway—that's what *I* say."

But Mr. Percival could not eat, and did not. He paid his modest bill, and mounted his wagon and prepared to start. "You go to the west'ard?" asked Brigham with laudable curiosity—for what are we without human sympathies? He wanted to know where his guest was going, of course he did.

"Going west'ard?"

"No, no," said Mr. Percival hastily, as he started his horses and rattled away along the road and across the bridge as he had come. It was a dismal ride; and not the warm sunshine, nor the pleasant fields, nor the rippling river, nor the song of birds, stirred his soul to pleasure or peace. He was as miserable a man as his most inveterate enemy, if he had one, could wish. Had he an enemy?

"That fellow's got a stone under his jacket, I'll bet a quarter," mused old Brigham—"and hired horses they are too. Well, go ahead! Sol Brigham's agreed if you are; t'ain't much of a concern anyway—that's what *I* say."

X.

WHAT DID TOM EUSTIS KNOW?

Sol Brigham ate *his* breakfast as a man ought,—who has no stone under his jacket;—and he allowed it to settle quietly, so that there was no rattling of *his* "innards" that day. An hour afterward Tom Eustis, of whom we have had a glimpse, sauntered into the bar-room. He was pale and anything but cheery; such men never are cheery *when alone.* But now he was strangely moved. The face that he had seen sitting in that bar-room the night before had wakened in him strange suspicions, strange thoughts, strange purposes. It was, it must have been a face he had seen years before, when he was but a boy; and it was a face that many and many a time had darkened his father's door. Had it not darkened that door and brought over that home a pall of blackness? Had not ruin followed that face? And when it had vanished, going hence its own way, had not the demon of misery taken its place? *He*, he was riding over the earth taking his ease, and enjoying his pleasures, while *she*, the only sister of Tom Eustis, was—what and where? Her mother was dead, her father had fled, and he himself was a complete failure,—rotten before he was ripe.

How much of Edward Percival did Tom Eustis *know?* How much did he *suspect?*

"Has your man gone?" he asked of Brigham.

"Gone? Yes, and gone like a fool with his insides empty;—there's fools here," said Brigham, significantly,—"but go to York if you want to find 'em first chop; that's what *I* say."

"He was from New York, was he?" asked Tom, not looking at Brigham.

"He's got it down so in the book."

"What was his name, did you say?"

"He's got it here,—Percy—'E. Percy, New York'—that's what he calls himself. A good-looking fellow enough; but what he wanted to come out here for, Lord knows.—Well, he paid his bill, that I'll say. A man as can pay his bills, *he* has friends enough,—eh, Tom?"

Tom did not hear him now,—he was thinking on that name. "Percy, Percy?—Yes, it is very like.—Percy,—Percival,—why not?"

Aloud—"So, he's gone back, has he?—Well, he's nothing to me, nor I to him. Let him go to the devil if he likes!"

Tom sauntered out, and his thought now was,—"I should like to see that man face to face." He walked about vaguely, for he had not yet a purpose. By and by a purpose came to him:—"Why not see him face to face?" It was past noon, what had he to do? Nothing. He found a stable and hired a saddlehorse, for he wanted to take a ride.

"But is he a good one?" he asked of the stable man.

"As easy as a cradle,—"

"Curse your cradle!—Can he go? has he wind? does he stumble?"—He was now impetuous, *for he had a purpose.*

"Yes, yes,—no, no,—to be sure he can,—of course" —was the confused answer of the man, as Tom struck the horse with his whip and dashed off.

It was past noon,—and the western shadows were just beginning to creep over the earth; Tom looked at the sun:—

"He's got the start, damn him!"

Away his horse galloped down the road;—quickly his toll was paid, across the bridge he galloped and away over the hills. But no horse can stand such headlong work; and with action Tom's impetuosity cooled. He began to see that at this rate his horse would be soon knocked up. He slacked up and allowed him to walk for a bit,—but not long; he knew Percival had got the start, and that he had two horses to his one. But then Tom had a spur in his flesh that drove him on desperately;—the other man, had he none?

Percival had dashed his horses over the bridge and along that road at a headlong speed too, for he *had* a spur in his side, or a devil in his soul, that allowed him no rest. He spared neither horse nor waggon, but kept up his pace till the hot May sun began to wilt his horses. There was nothing for it but to slacken his speed;—nothing for it but to stop and rest and feed them at noon. Then Percival walked up and down, up and down, up and down;—but he himself wanted no

food, no rest; no, *he now had a purpose*, he must get to the city, he must find that woman and that child; and if that woman was Sarah Eustis, and that child was Sarah Eustis's child, then they should be his, his, his!—to love, to care for, to do for, to protect, to cherish, to provide for!—yes, to acknowledge as his own flesh and blood, in spite of all the protestations of "ridiculous," come they from Mistress Matilda Percival or all the world! That scanty, poor, wretched measure of justice, at least, they should have on this earth;—and more, more, if he could give it them.

Such was the impulse which now drove him on, which worked him to fury at this delay. He dreamed of nothing behind him, only of what was before. But the avenging fates do follow on, and sometimes they catch us. He went to the stables and watched the horses as they munched their feed; it seemed to him they were very slow about it:—he set the man to rubbing them dry, for that would freshen them for the drive;—he urged him to get the harnesses on, and to turn the waggon round to face the street. What's the use of so much delay?

At last they started. The horses were good, and they did the work of three days in two;—they answered to whip and voice and worked well, and did not fear to make a burst at mounting the hills. In this hasting speed Edward Percival found a certain exhilaration, and a slight relief for his remorse. But when the shadows of evening began to close around him, he still drove on, and on; for he could not bear to stop, to be alone in a poor tavern with nothing to do, nobody to

speak to, and to remember, remember—the miserable story of what he had done. And where was that woman, where that child? Were they those who had sat on his cold steps that cold wintry night to perish? God of mercy, what torture!

To be alone! To be alone when one is happy is not the delight of humanity;—but to be alone when one is wretched increases the wretchedness; and to be alone when one is stung with remorse is—hell.

Tom Eustis too rode on and on, and the shadows grew longer and deeper; the cows began to saunter toward the bars, and lying there chewed their cuds and waited; the birds began to twitter in their leafy bowers and to smooth their feathers; a man and an ox team now and then stopped his way for a moment, on their homeward way. Tom Eustis cared for none of these things;—*he had a purpose*, vague to be sure, but a purpose. So far he knew he was travelling the right road, and if he kept his pace he knew he would accomplish his purpose whatever it was, or whatever it might come to be. So he asked no questions;—he lost no time, in describing a pair of horses and a buggy and a single man driving, and asking if such had passed along this road, and when? He knew they had, and he pressed on. The shadows of evening began to close around him, but he saw through the deepening darkness nothing of what he sought. But now there are *two* roads, which is the one he wants? How is he to know? One is travelled as much as the other, they both lead in the same general direction; which shall he take? There is

nothing for it but to trust the horse. The flanks of the horse are wet, they beat quickly, he puffs out the breath from his flexible nostril, he hangs his head toward the earth as his rider slackens the bridle. The horse cares naught but to find a stable and to get his supper and his bed. He is nigh spent, too, Master Tom. His nose near the earth, may smell his resting-place; he follows it, he decides *his* road and then his rider puts him to his pace. Five miles they go yet,—ten,—fifteen. It will not do; a sign-board swings on its post, and on it is writ in plain letters—ENTERTAINMENT FOR MAN AND BEAST. The horse comes to a dead stand; he can do no more.

XI.

TOM EUSTIS'S CURSE.

Why prolong this ride? The next day was fitful, and early in it clouds began to sweep over the sky. If Tom Eustis expects to catch Mr. Edward Percival he must be stirring early. He is stirring early, but not so early as Edward Percival. Neither eats his breakfast in Sol Brigham's leisurely way. And now the ride goes on; but Percival has the start;—he knows not however that one is following him, or he would not spare the lash. He wishes no interruptions or hindrances now; he wishes to reach his home, and there he has a work to do.

Percival has the start, and Tom Eustis knows it well; and he knows too he has to get on to the other road, and he knows he can and will:—but his horse is not so fresh as yesterday and he must favor him. Yet he pushes on with such speed as he can; now and then he dismounts and plucking bunches of grass rubs his horse's legs; he knows that this will keep him along his road,—the more he stops the faster he goes. Ten miles brings him to the road he had left, and he sees there a fresh track of wheels, fresh tracks of horses' feet,—what he wants to see. Now he rides on. The

clouds thicken and his horse is not fresh.—"Blast it!" What can he do? It is past noon and he reaches one of those crossroad inns. There is nothing for it but to stop and feed.

A thought strikes him:—

"What a cursed fool I am!" "Landlord say—have you got a horse you can let me have?—Mine is pretty well knocked up, and I want to get to Paterson to-night. I should like to take yours and leave mine."

A bargain is made and now Tom rides on faster, and faster, and faster. Again the long shadows begin to creep over the earth, again the cows saunter lazily to their homes, again the ploughman makes his slow journey;—and yet Tom Eustis sees nothing of the horses or waggon or man he follows. Why does he follow them, what *is* his purpose? Perhaps he does not know himself. Still he follows and now he presses his horse as the darkness deepens. He sees a dark object,—is it? yes, it is a waggon. He urges with whip and voice, and his horse breaks into a quick beating gallop;—now he sees a man and alone:—the man hears the beating of the quick gallop and sees the following horseman. Why does he too now urge on his horses with voice and whip? Does he fear murder? It is impossible to say what he fears, but *something!* Away they now go through the thickening dark, hunter and hunted, at the top of their speed; but the fresh horse gains on the tired pair. Tom draws alongside the waggon; he sees the face he had seen before, a mere outline in the gathering gloom.

'Aha, my friend, you drive fast!" Edward Percival

makes no answer, he looks neither to right nor left; he spares not his horses, he dashes forward; but the rider keeps his place.

"Does Mr. Percy remember one *Mr. Edward Percival?*"

No reply,—away the horses go.

"Does Mr. Edward Percival remember Sarah Eustis?"

No reply,—faster they go.

"Did Mr. Edward Percival seek that house to make fair and honest love?"

No reply,—they dash on.

"Did Mr. Edward Percival come like a snake to poison with his hissing breath the fair home of virtue and peace?"

No reply,—they ride fast.

"Does Mr. Edward Percival know that Sarah Eustis, the fairest girl in all the country, is now dying or dead, a wretched and despised outcast?"

No words,—the wind blows fiercely.

"Does Mr. Edward Percival know how four lives are blighted that he might have his will! that a house is in ruins! that hearts are broken! that hell has come upon earth!"

He shouted his words into the ears of the wretched, conscience-stricken man as they now rushed onward.

"My curses rest upon you evermore! And the curses of a father and a mother lie in your bed! And the curses of Sarah Eustis clutch your heart! and the curses of a little child poison your cup! And may the dew blight and the sunshine blister you, whose breath

and word have been blight and blister and misery to me and to all I love!" Raising his voice higher—"May God damn you down to Hell!"

* * * * * *

It was frightful—it must end. Not a word was said by Edward Percival; the reins fell from his palsied hands; his horses were frantic, there was a shock, a crash, a convulsion, and away went the horses with a wreck dangling at their heels; and a sardonic laugh went after them—

"Ha-ha! ha-ha! ha-ha!"

XII.

TO MAKE HIM LOVE HER.

Mrs. Percival sat at home alone in that silent house. There were now no receptions; no balls now; nothing for a lonely woman to do in that great city.

What a pity that she could not read a pleasant book —like this—and so amuse herself and find friends and interest and sympathies in its pages. Dear me—what a wretched time of it they have who do not know how to read!

It was rather dismal; she looked over the *Post*, but nobody was dead that she cared for, and there was nothing about Paris in it, and not a single dreadful accident or frightful convulsion. She thought it very dull and threw it down. Then she walked up and down once or twice and looked at herself in the large mirror, and turned herself to see how her dress hung behind,—and that ended that. Then she sat in the window and looked into the street; there were many, many passers, a stream; but none that she knew or cared for. Oh, she wished so that somebody cared enough for her, to come and see and amuse and sympathize with her, and wake her up and give her a thrill.

"Dear me, how stupid it is!"

If she had had a spirited book to read, she would not have said that, eh?

The evening was soft and the air was warm, and a flaring gas-light would have been offensive; so she had none. But the shades of evening did not raise her spirits or lessen the dullness. Oh, it was very, very dull. She tried the piano and rambled over the keys, and now and again she sang a snatch of a song, for she knew many, and she sang them prettily. But there is small satisfaction in singing to one's self, unless one is a bird or has a bird's nature; and that Matilda Percival had not. She was real enough and honest enough; but she had not, as we know, a spontaneous, generous, ample nature. She was ready to receive, but had little to give. It was her misfortune, more's the pity,—and she was not alone in this:—there are many such.

"Oh, if Edward were only here we could go somewhere;—to some play, or to see some pictures, or do something. But what could he have gone to Pennsylvania for? He has never been there since I knew him. I do wish men would tell their wives what they are doing. Dear me, Edward never tells much to me now. What can be the reason? I am sure I love him as much as ever, or I should if I was only *sure* he loved me:—but he is so silent, so busy with his "business" as he calls it. For my part I wish men would let their "business" go and devote themselves to their wives. There's no need of Edward's devoting himself to "business;"—but these men, as soon as they get tired of us that's all they care about us."

Such thoughts as these passed through the vacant

chambers of her mind; there was the least bit of spitefulness in the way she treated that word "business," not called for by the poor little word itself; though men do greatly abuse it and what it represents.

"Oh, if Edward were only here!"

But Edward is not here, he is away and lying stark, with the shadows of the night closing around him. When will she see him again?

The bell rings, she listens;—is this Edward?

Yes—no—no, that is not his step. She sits at her piano and listens. She hears a pleasant voice, not Edward Percival's, asking for her. The door opens and the owner of the voice enters. In the dim light she can just see that it is a young man, younger than herself, that he is elegantly dressed, and she perceives that he is radiant of sweet odors. His hair is parted in the middle and his gloves are unexceptionable. He is his own ideal of a man, and that of many a girl beside.

He advanced bowing and she rises expectant.—

"O, Mr. Templeton,—is this you? Well, I am very glad to see you,—how do you do?"—

"Well,—and you?"

He touched her ungloved hand tenderly, and bowed gracefully;—and his voice was sweet, and his manner flattering. A woman could not help liking Dubois Templeton.

He was a young English gentleman, younger than she—who with grace and manner and some money, had come to the New World to seek his fortune; possibly he expected to find it in the wife he should marry.

Seeking it he went everywhere, was liked by most; and he lived upon the philosophic axiom,—

> "Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
> Take the goods the Gods provide thee."

He had neither principles, nor habits, nor occupations which prevented him from following his own secret will. If ever there was a fluid, flowing man this was he. Why should he come in to see Mrs. Percival this night of all in the year? He neither knew nor cared.

"Alone, eh? Well, that is my good fortune. For believe me, my dear Mrs. Percival, I am such a simpleton that I always feel myself de trop if I am the third. And then it is such presumption for a poor single devil to push himself in between a husband and wife, thus marring a scene of connubial bliss; by heavens! if I had such a wife as I see so many of here in America," —he looked tenderly into Mrs. Percival's eyes,—"I should be tempted to stick a knife into one of those marplots,—I should I declare."

They were seated. Mrs. Percival received his persiflage at its value.

"Then Mr. Templeton, I take it we shall see you plunging into that river of domestic bliss shortly. Do you tell yet, who is the happy woman?"

He laughed, she laughed.

"Ah my dear Mrs. Percival,—it's been my misfortune to be a little too late. The loveliest beings are always snapped up first;—but," a gentle sigh—"what is the use? I should never have secured the one I wanted."

"And why not? With a handsome face, fine manners, a flattering tongue, we are always caught;—poor flies that we are, fluttering around the brilliant candle."

Now she was flattering him; it is pleasant to be flattered, it is pleasant to flatter, when one knows that one is appreciated.

"By heavens!" said he, "there never were such women as you Americans; if I could but get one to love me, I should be at her feet like a spaniel dog, and only live gazing into her eyes. And yet,—I see curious things;"—would he venture?—"I see the husbands of these fascinating creatures, walking about, playing billiards, smoking segars, as if no lovely one were at home waiting for a word and a smile. What are they made of? Pray tell me, Mrs. Percival, what they are made of?"

"It's hard to tell," she said, "what you men are made of;—I fancy you are all alike. 'Business,' that's the excuse you make for anything you want to do. 'Business' is an odious word;—men make such a time about it as if the world would end if they did not think and eat and talk 'business' from year's end to year's end."

Still a little bitterness left.

"Ah, but then Mrs. Percival, business gets these fine things,"—waving his hand around the fine rooms,—"which I find everybody wants and will almost die to get."

"Not me, Mr. Templeton. I am sure I would rather have one man's devoted admiration and love than all the houses in New York."—Was she not saying too

much, perhaps betraying a secret? "So would *any* woman. When I married Mr. Percival, a house never entered my thoughts. It was only the love of one man, the man whom I was to call mine that I asked; and—that I got."

Mr. Templeton understood her—possibly.

"What I say," he replied, "is that when I get one of them, if one will ever let me, poor devil that I am, I will show these husbands how to love; I shall be carried round the town as the model husband, I am sure; I should like to practise a little, so as to prove myself. So Mr. Percival is absent, and you will tolerate me for an hour until his return?"

He said it deprecatingly;—and then it went through the heart of this unsatisfied woman, that Edward Percival should,—yes, *should* yet love her as she felt she deserved to be loved;—or—what? She knew not what. She only longed that her husband might return, and then she would practise every art, would try every wile, would go out of herself, would move earth and heaven to *make him love her*. This passionate desire now took shape as a passionate determination; and henceforth is to complicate the lives of two, perhaps three persons of our little drama.

All this took but an instant in her woman's heart, where thought is an inspiration, and where feeling becomes action as swift as the lightning's flash. Her talk with Mr. Templeton did not cease a moment.

"You are too modest,—quite; I am the one to be tolerated, you the one to bless. No, Mr. Percival is absent for a few days, and so I am alone. I know he

will be but too much obliged to you for enlivening my solitude. A woman is a poor creature you know without her husband."

He laughed lightly. "I should put it the other way;—A man is a poor creature without a wife. Do you know, Mrs. Percival, this is a kind of mania with me? I hear men speak of their wives just as if they were ordinary women; I see them go away and come back as if they lived in a boarding-house. It passes me;—it seems to me a home is a kind of shrine and a wife a sort of deity;—don't you think so?"

She smiled at his extravagance. "I fancy, Mr. Templeton, we shall see you like the rest,—settling down into the hum-drum man of business; love will give way to ledgers, and sentiment will not be so sweet as sugars, and so on."

"No, by heavens!" He took her soft warm hand in his;—it made her thrill; was he going to make love to her? No,—not at all. "You were singing when I came in, Mrs. Percival, let me hand you to the piano. If anything can console a man for his isolation, it is music. I am that kind of person that I could fall down and worship a woman who could and would sing me two airs from Don Giovanni. Do not refuse me, Mrs. Percival?"

He stood before her beseechingly, holding her hand. She could not refuse him, why should she? But why did Edward Percival never talk in this way? Oh that a man might remain a lover forever, and say words in earnest such as this man said without meaning!

Love is a delirium, Matilda Staunton, which you may

never excite. Love is a delirium, too, which cannot last; love is an ecstasy, a heat, which makes two souls fruitful in tenderness, sympathy, consolation; it doubles joys, it halves sorrows; it keeps the heart young, and it makes the judgment gentle; it gives and gives and gives all, and demands nothing; it has faith, and it does works, and it never bargains; it burns fiercely in youth, and slower in age, and slower, but it never dies; and when old age does come, they two who love need no words, no deeds; they have touched, and know they are *one*.

She sang of course, and he bent over her of course, and murmured sweet thanks of course; but as this is not a love story it is not necessary to repeat here what they said. The soft summer night drew on, but no bell rang, no step was heard in the hall. Edward Percival did not lie in his own bed that night.

XIII.

DEAD I'M THINKING.

A PAIR of horses spent and dripping, dashed into Paterson with the strips of a harness whipping their heels. But where was the wagon?—Where the driver? It was dark, it was late, it seemed useless to go out in search of a stranger who might very well be safe. The horses found their stable as horses always do, and ate their food and slept in their bed; but the man, where was he?

It happened the morning after, that Tom Bellows was brushing with early steps the dewy grass, following his cows down the road to his best pasture. But his mind was not at ease,—something preyed upon it. He talked to himself.

"That dog,—I vow! I wouldn't have believed it of him; no better dog 'n he ever chawed up a neighbor's dog so friendly—and he to go off this way:—it's the dumdest thing I ever see. Here I am, nobody but old Nance now to talk to, and she don't understand half so well as he did. It's my private opinion that pisen did it;—if I could find his carkiss I'd *know*—I would, by George!"

"Eh? what's this, eh?" Tom was startled. Somebody's been smashin' up his wagon into match timber,—

done it pretty thorough too. Wal, I'm kind o' glad I ain't in the wagon busniss—to put that are trap into shape would make a man set up nights:—Wal, by George! it beats cockfightin', it does so." Tom walked around the wreck contemplatingly. "Now, where's the cattle? I wouldn't give a quarter for the whole concern, not in my note, not a quarter;—likker aboard as like as not, that smashes things generally;—too bad I vow; a good wagon and good hosses. I dare say spilt, jest spilt; I wouldn't give a quarter in my note for the whole concern;—likker's done it!"

Tom's mind was quite engrossed with the damage to the wagon and horses, he had not thought of the driver. Suddenly his eye spied a hat which he at once examined. "'BEEBE' eh? That's your name, is it?" reading the maker's card—"Beebe you be, be you? Where may your head be, Mr. Beebe? Beebe? its a dumd ridic'lus name anyway; Beebe, Beebe?" Tom laughed at its ridiculousness, he was not used to it; had never worn Mr. Beebe's hats on his own head. But he began now to look about for an owner to the hat; he followed his cows, wearing Mr. Beebe's hat on his own hard head, which it fitted quite well.

"Where are you Mr. Beebe? If your head's come out o' your hat, as good as your hat's come off your head, you'll do."

He soon came to a tree whose bark was stripped up and down.

"That looks spiteful anyway; hereabouts he'll be. Mr. Beebe! Mr. Beebe!" he shouted,—no response. He pushed away the bushes and looked in.

"Ah, I thought so." There lay the body of a man, well dressed, silent and still. Tom went in and raised him up;—he looked at his pale face, covered on one side with blood. "Bad job, anyway; wagon broke, horses spilt, head split; its a ridic'lus piece of business, Mr. Beebe."

The gash on his cheek and temple was deep and ugly, but it hardly bled now. Tom felt of his forehead, it was cold—of his hands, they were cold.

"Dead, I'm thinkin'!"

Then he opened his vest and put his hand to his heart:—"No,—not yet, not yet. Give him a chance anyway."

He now drew him to the road-side at the foot of the spiteful tree. What next?

"Better get him to the house anyway;—a man may as well die decent. He ain't much to lift,—let's see."

Tom's strong arms raised the slighter body of Mr. Percival, and with Mr. Beebe's hat on his head, he carried him easily to his house. The old black woman who made up Tom's household, saw him coming, but what was his strange load?

"Lordy massy—what you got dar?" she asked.

"I've got a Beebe, pretty consid'able astonished too."

"Is de chile ded?" asked the old woman in alarm.

"No, not dead, but dreadful astonished." He laid him on his poor bed, and took off the smooth hat. "Now look a' that! Hat not hurt a mite, head smashed in!"

Old Nance was busy with the wounded man.

"Here you, Mass Tom—take off dis' coat,—dar;—

now we'll fetch him to;—you rub dar, I rub here:—so now."

They worked at his hands and his feet,—they put water on his face,—Tom blew in his mouth, and by and by they could see signs of breathing, faint but certain.

XIV.

WHERE WAS EDWARD?

THE wounded man lived, but quite unconscious of the astonishment which *Tom* felt. He had no feeling,—sense was dead for the time. Blessed thing is this living death, when the soul is burned as with fire.

Tom and Nancy got him undressed and covered in Tom's bed, where he breathed slowly and heavily. Would he live, would he die? Tom believed he would die. He sought among his pockets for something which should tell more.

"No watch, eh? no pocket-book, eh! It looks as tho' Mr. Beebe had been consid'ably robbed—it does so."

"Mebby he nebber had no watch an' no pocket-book!" suggested Nancy.

"Ho Nance—a dum pretty white man he'd be,—without no watch and no pocket-book! Why, Nance, the beggars in York have 'em; a pretty white man he'd be. Nance, you're a miserable nigger woman and so you trust in God to get your vittals, and you work for 'em too; but a pretty white man he'd be, without a pocket-book! eh? What's here? a letter? '*Mr.*' that's Mister—'*Edward Per-ci-val—No. — Broad-*

way.' Here's a pretty piece of work! What's Mr. Beebe doing with Mr. Edward Percival's letters—and opened too? Oh, Mr. Beebe, Mr. Beebe!"

A thought or a memory struck him,—

"Why, Percyval—that's the name the woman with the little 'un was askin' about."

There was much confusion in Tom's mind about Mr. Beebe and Mr. Percival, and whether or not somebody had been robbed; but he took a determination to go to *No. — Broadway* and see what that meant. He put on his Sunday coat, harnessed up his horse and started, first for Paterson to send up a doctor, and then for New York.

It was afternoon when he found the house; and Mrs. Percival in a very beautiful wrapper was then reposing herself upon her lounge in her own bedroom, wondering whether Edward would come to-day; when the bell rang, it startled her and she sat up, and heard a man,—it was not Edward Percival,—saying,—

"Is Mr. Percyval to home?"

"No, he is not—he's absent from the city, sir."

"Is Miss Percyval to home?"

"No, she is not—she's hout, sir."

"Wal, I'm kind o' sorry; I wanted to ask her about a fellow who was smashed up out to Basset's Cross-roads:—You tell her he had a letter in his pocket marked 'Mr. Edward Percival,' and his name was Beebe, and its dum'd queer—don't you think so, eh?"

Matilda Percival heard him, her heart stopped, she knew that some dreadful thing had happened,—she could not move,—the door shut. Then she shrieked—

"Call him, call him! Call that man back! Oh my God! What is it?"

Mr. Tobbots was alarmed, his nerves as he said, "was all of a flutter"—but he got the door opened and stopped Tom Bellows.

Mrs. Percival rushed down the stairs—

"Oh, what is it—what is it? Tell me at once—is he alive? is he dead? where is he? Tell me quick, quick, quick!"

She seized Tom's arm,—whose breath was almost taken away at such terror.

"So I will, mom, if you'll stop jest a minute;—yes he is—

"Is—is what? Is he dead?"

"No, he is not dead, but jest about as much smashed up as ever you see;—wagon all gone to match timber, hosses all bunged up—

"Oh, but Edward—what about him? Where is he, where is he?"

"That's Mr. Beebe—he's to my house."

"No, no, no!—Where's Edward? where! man, tell me!"

"That's what *I* want to know; the *other* fellow's to my house with his head consid'ably cut up, but he's not dead, not yet."

Mrs. Percival sank to the floor:—a dreadful something had come to her husband,—but what was it? She sank into unconsciousness. Mr. Tobbots was beside himself. Tom took up the light form and carried it up to her own room and laid it on her bed.

XV.

MATILDA.

Mrs. Percival came to herself to discover the dreadful fact, that her husband was wounded, perhaps dead. She ordered her carriage, and with her maid and Tom Bellows drove up through the rolling Jersey country, to find the form of her husband dead or alive. She was devoured with impatience and anxiety;—but her nerves braced themselves to the work. Yes, it was the wreck of her husband she found, the once handsome Edward Percival; but he knew her not, could not hear her agonized cry—

"Oh Edward, my husband, my husband!" He lay in his dreadful paralysis, only his labored breath telling that he was alive.

She stayed with him, she nursed him, in this miserable little house of Tom Bellows. She lay on his bed and smoothed the wounded head, she whispered soft loving words in his ear:—but he heard not, heeded not. Where was his soul during these months that now passed?

As soon as possible she moved him to his own house.

There she tended him as a mother tends a child.

This terrible blow, this imminent danger had waked in her new life, new energies, new purposes, new hopes

Now it had come to her,—a great and noble occupation, something to *do:*—she who had all her life been done for, petted and spoiled, could now do something for some one, and that *one* her husband. Now he would love her—yes, she would make him. His weakness, his helplessness inspired her with tenderness and pity:—after all a great strong man might be weaker than a woman, and then a weak woman could be his ministering angel. That she would be henceforth. She saw how negligent and indifferent she had been to all the *small* tendernesses and cares, how cold and selfish, and unsympathetic; she lamented it with tears; but now, now—all should be different; all kindness and love. She who had no other thing to do, no other purpose in life, might now bless *one* man at least. She would do it.

And then he would love her, with his whole soul—he could not help it; she felt that her own love would warm and inspire his; it must be so. With all her own plans and purposes of being loving and tender and unselfish, there was mingled this one terrible desire—to have him at her feet, her willing slave. Ah, Matilda Staunton's was not a generous nature; and yet she was now bent upon a new life; perhaps she will grow to be generous and large-hearted, and so will satisfy her own want:—for the Book says, "*Give*, and it shall be given to *you*, good measure, pressed down, and running over."

Month after month dragged slowly away; the hot summer was past, the beautiful autumn went by, the cold December days came again, and still the wretched man lay in his living death. She tended him, she slept

by him, she watched him, she whispered loving words in his ear; but all in vain;—the soul was dead, or asleep; would it ever waken? She did not despair, nor stop in her true work. But if he would only open his eyes and look at her and *see her*, if he would only whisper one conscious word—what joy!

Where was the little one, Luly—who we have seen had drifted into port in the ample arms of Misthress Mulloy? Still drifting, drifting. On the first day of May in every year one-half of the good people of the city move their household goods. Misthress Mulloy was not an exception. She too had moved and with her had gone the child, now hers; and with the child had gone "that dog," which Tom Bellows loved with a puzzled regret;—both were loved, both lost.

The beautiful days of May came again, and through the open windows came the soft spring airs perfumed with the scents of the wistarias, and bringing too, perhaps, from the New Jersey fields, the fragrance of the clovers; and with the soft air came the soft hum of bees, and the insensible sounds of insects which make the air of spring *live*. But these are not sounds to waken a torpid soul, to bring back a soul that has fled; —surely not.

Mrs. Percival, weary and nigh hopeless, sat in the evening light at her window leaning her weary head upon her nerveless hand. Those scents, those sounds brought no life to her. She was pale, she was dulled, she saw before her only loneliness and desolation more

and more intense.—There was a motion! She was startled, alert—what did it mean? for some subtle sense told her it was strange, different.

"*Matilda*"— was the whisper.

She sprang to his bedside, put her arms around him and kissed those lips;—would they speak again? She prayed, she listened, she waited.

"*Who are you?*"

O, such weak and feeble and poor little words!—but they thrilled her very heart, for they were a revelation; a soul had come back, or had wakened from a dreadful sleep.

"Your dear loving wife:—Oh, Edward! speak again—speak to me!" She kissed him again and again; tears flooded her eyes, joy her heart.

She prayed, she listened, she waited.

"*Where is the woman?*"

"Woman! Oh, Edward! what woman?"

After a moment—"*Was she dead?*"

"Oh my Edward, my dear husband,—you are alive, that is enough. Let us talk of nothing else. Lie still and I will sing to you."

She sang in a low voice a simple hymn which everybody knows and loves,—

"Peace, troubled soul"—

and he dropped away into unconsciousness. But that day marked a change, a new life. Slowly, slowly but surely the soul came back and the body strengthened and became alive and active again. Where was that soul during all those months?

Now Matilda Percival brought into use all the woman that was in her; she read to him, she sung, she smoothed his hair, she watched him, she played with him, she told him of all pleasant things. He could not resist these things,—it was impossible; he loved her, almost. But as the mind came back, back came also a throng of bitter, fearful memories, that *she* knew not of, that *she* could not comprehend or console or spirit away.

XVI.

ALONE AND DAMNED.

He grew stronger, he was driven out, he could walk, and he was becoming a man once more. To all her kindness and love he was responsive; his face lighted when hers shone upon him; he talked when she talked; he listened when she sung. She knew that she pleased him, she considered how to please him, she tried to like *his* friends, she invented new pleasures; she thought of him now more than of herself, and thus these two were becoming lovers indeed.

But when his face did not meet hers, when it was not responsive and alive to her presence, upon it settled a shadow, gray and dark; it told her, for she saw it, that a secret something was hidden from her in that bruised soul. What was it? She did not venture to ask directly, but in every way she tried to get the trouble from him, to share it with him; thus to exorcise the evil spirit, by the touch of kindness and love.

He evaded her search; he shrank from her touch, gentle though it was; he endured his pain in silence; and yet not in silence, for in the watches of the night she heard his moan, and one night a few muttered words:—She listened,

"*Alone!* yes—and—*damned!*"

Nothing more. She shuddered, for what might it not mean? All that night she lay awake pondering this thing, and he lay sleeping, sleeping uneasily, restlessly, moaning now and then. It does not seem a happy life for these two; it was not a happy life. Edward Percival grew stronger and stronger, but the gray shadow rested on his face and shadowed his life. He could never forget the evil deed he had done, the fearful misery he had caused, the frightful curse he bore. Why had he not died then, then when he was so near it, and so made an end? What, with that frantic man's fierce curse singing in his ear, burning in his soul! Better not so, better to live and right the wrong if it can be righted. How can it be righted? Can he undo the evil deed? Can he bring back life and peace and comfort and respect to those poor people? Impossible. No evil deed can be undone, no suffering once caused can be atoned for. He must bear it, he must suffer, he must be whipped with scorpion's whips, he must see that dead woman's face in his dreams, and in his doorway with open eyes; —must hear that child's cry, perishing with cold and misery and starvation;—and that child, *his child!*

The kindness, the care, even the love of his wife cannot banish these terrible things. Could he tell *her?* Could he reveal to Matilda Staunton, who had married him for an honest and high-minded man, that he had betrayed a woman to her own undoing; not in cold blood to be sure, not deliberately and with a hard heart;—but he had deserted her, had ceased to care for her, had determined not to know her more, had sacrificed her and her love ruthlessly to his own selfish ambitions and plans

of life; had left her to her ruin and misery, had believed she would have disgraced him, and had gone on his own way to marry Matilda Staunton, the beautiful girl whom "society" praised and flattered. He too had been charmed, had fancied he loved her and had succeeded in marrying her;—and now was he to tell her that he did not love her, that he did love Sarah Eustis, and that by day and by night he was searching to find this poor outcast and her miserable child, to make them his?

It seemed impossible to him. Does it seem easy to you? Had Matilda Staunton been one of the great loving-hearted ones, perhaps he would have been glad to tell her, and she would have been glad to wash him white with tears of pity and love—would have been ready and glad to shelter that poor woman and that sinless child under her wings as a hen shelters her brood.

Who can comprehend that subtle something which impels us to tell our secret thoughts to one, to conceal our common thoughts from another? No one can, but the fact remains. And the fact existed here;—Edward Percival could not tell his wife his miserable secret,—not yet.

XVII.

S. E. E. P.

Time passes, and time does wonders. Time heals wounds, and time levels mountains;—but time does not undo the deed that's done.

Edward Percival grew stronger, the gash on his head had healed leaving an ugly scar. Time however did not heal the wound of the soul, did not obliterate the burning blast of Tom Eustis's curse. But with returning strength, Mr. Percival at once set about a search for the woman and child who had been found on his doorstep more than a year before. It was almost a hopeless task but not quite. He went from police station to police station in his search; did it himself, for who could he trust to do such a work? At last he was rewarded. At a station he found the sergeant who had made the entry in his book on that cold December morning, in the gray December light.

There it was, written down,—and Edward Percival's eyes read it,—

"*A woman and a child,—one dead, the woman,—found on them a locket with the letters, S. E. E. P.*"

"My God!" exclaimed Edward Percival under his breath. It was true—she was dead and the child, her

child, his child, where was she? Dead too? He mastered himself.

"What became of the woman?"

"Buried I 'spose—we always bury such in the paupers' ground—"

Paupers' ground! This young creature once so full of life, once so full of love for him, lay dead in the paupers' ground!

"The child?"

"O the child;—let me see,"—he examined the book —"*the child taken by Marg'rit Mulloy.*"

"Where is Margaret Mulloy?"

"Bless you sir, we never try to keep track of them; here to-day gone to-morrow."

"*I must find her.*"— Mr. Percival spoke most decidedly but in a low voice, "It will be worth a hundred dollars to me to find her."

The sergeant was impressed with the manner or the money. He got up and spoke to one of the policemen in another quarter of the room.

"Here sir, is the man who brought in the child; he may be able to help you."

Mr. Percival made every inquiry but failed to discover what he wanted, because the man did not know. But he promised to seek and find if possible. Now policemen have ways of making discoveries, and it would not be very difficult to trace Misthress Mulloy to her old place in Mott Court;—but there the man was baffled; she had departed thence and none knew whither; 'those who had once known her knew her no more; *there was not the least trace.*

Mr. Percival did not give it up. He stimulated more than one policeman to new exertions, but nothing came of it;—the child was not found. Nor was there any trace discovered of Misthress Mulloy. Had they known of the 'Juke' it would have been easy, but nothing was known, except that the woman's name was Margaret Mulloy.

Mr. Percival grew stronger and was almost himself again. He had been excited and stimulated and encouraged by the search he had been making; and hopes had been born that this child of Sarah Eustis was to be found, and was to be his; his to love, to cherish, to live for. But as these hopes faded away into nothing, he sank back into the darkness and despondency which had gathered about him. Nothing was left but to wait and endure, nothing but to plunge again into engrossing, harassing business:—better that than this hopeless negation and blank purposeless sea of life. He saw Sarah Eustis's dead face staring at him through windows, he heard Tom Eustis's curse hissed on the passing wind. And sometimes he feared, *he hoped* he might go mad. No, he was not to go mad, he was to live on, and endure, and grow older, and see happiness and—misery too; such is the lot of mortal man.

Matilda Percival watched, and she saw the gray shadows again settling over him. But she redoubled her efforts, her cares, her caresses. She had not by her nature that intuitive woman's tact which makes woman such a marvellous creature; but it was coming to her; and the more she went out of herself to become one with him, the more womanly she became; the more

she gave the more she had; the more she did for him, the more she loved him; and the more she loved him *the more he loved her.* And there was where her blessedness began to come. But she could never forget that to make *him love her*, thoroughly, engrossingly was the end and purpose of her life. Indeed it had become now the only purpose of her life: for Mr. Percival's sickness had put an end to the dull Receptions and to the business of "society," in which she once had plunged as a matter of course, and because other women did. She walked with him, and rode with him, and sat with him whenever she could; and he could not fail to respond to all this kindness and caressing care. It gave him faith in her;—could he trust her fully and fairly?

During the day Mr. Percival now found occupation at his office and among his warehouses and ships. He devoted mind and body to them, for they drove out other and more painful things; the old mania for getting and getting more and more money was coming upon him; for what else could he do? Perhaps he was not altogether hopeless that one day he might find his lost child, and then how he would pour out his fortune at her feet. *Her feet?* Was his child a girl?—was his child a boy? He could not know, but somehow he pictured to himself a little girl with *blue eyes and wavy hair*—such eyes and hair as Sarah Eustis had once had;—and he could hear a little voice saying,—"Papa, I am your little girl,—and I love you!"

It was folly—and he knew it, the most useless folly in the world; but now and then such foolish fancies

would come upon him. More often however as he sat alone in his own house, such fancies did not come, but just the opposite of them,—and he saw his child dying, dead of want and cold and hunger, and dying without love. The gray shadows settled down and his eye became cold and dark. His wife then cared for him and caressed him and loved him; and as she sat by him one evening holding his hand in hers, and leaning her head on his shoulder, he thought of her, as she wished to be thought of, as a true loving and tender wife. Could he trust her?

"Matilda,—

"Edward,—

"A curse is upon me—and but for you I should have gone mad."

"Oh, Edward!" She clasped his hand in hers,—what was he going to say? For a moment she was scared, but only for a moment.

"I have been a base, heartless, cruel man, have cared for nothing but myself, have deserved the hell I have suffered"—

"Oh, my husband,—my husband, do not talk so!"

"Have played the part of a fool and a scoundrel, and now *I* know it,—and *you* know it!"

"No, Edward—no!"

He went on:—

"Sarah Eustis was as young and as fair once as you were, she was young and simple and trusting; I went to her father's house and fancied I loved her, yes I did love her! and she loved me as a young, simple and trusting creature does; I was a fool and a scoundrel, I betrayed

her and deserted her. I believed she was not good enough to be my *wife*, and I deserted her basely and cruelly ;—I married you, made you my wife when I deserved perdition ! And now a curse follows me, it haunts me, it burns into me ;—I have sought that wretched woman, have sought her child—"

"Oh my God ! my husband !" She grasped him with her arms, and a fearful pang shot through her—' would he find her, make her his, and then must she—she Matilda Staunton be cast out ?'

"*She is dead ;*—such wretchedness killed her, for God is more merciful than man :—she is dead ! and the child—"

"Oh where, where is it ?" She breathed free, she was saved.

"— is lost, abandoned in this great city. I have sought in vain, it cannot be found—"

"Let us look for it !—let us never doubt—we *will* find it. Oh Edward, we will make it ours—mine, mine !" Now she was generous, she was fearful no more.

"I have sought in vain ;—whether the child is living or dead, I cannot discover,—perhaps never shall ; but I live on with the curse of that wretched woman, with the curse of all her kin upon my head. And now I have told you all, that you too may despise and contemn and curse me as I deserve."

He withdrew his hand from hers, and bowed his head.

She rose from her chair,—to go away ? to hate, despise and curse him ?

No ; she came in front of him, she put her arms

around him, and kissed his hair, his clothes, his hands; she raised his head with her hands and held it to her bosom; she smoothed his cheek and kissed his brow, and comforted him;—*and he loved her.*

XVIII.

FORWARD ALL!

Five years pass swiftly, if misery and want do not grind too heavily. To the wretched time is long. But why be wretched? What matters it?—there is to come one day a great settling and the crooked will be made straight, the rough smooth. Ah yes, but in the mean time who enjoys the crooked and the rough? Who does not try to get away from his own shadow?

The shadow is a part of *us*, and belongs to life. No such thing as perfection can be reached, and we may as well know it, and try to live at peace *with our shadows*. That is philosophy.

Five years passed as Mr. and Mrs. Percival went on their way together. The curse had not killed them, nor had any violent change come. He had gone deeper and deeper into his business, for he was impelled by a frantic spirit which could not let him rest. She had pursued her new path and had learned to live in the love of her husband which now expressed itself, and which had grown to be almost satisfying; but not quite, not quite. But in spite of all, the fine house remained silent and drear; there *was* a chill in it which Mr. Percival ever felt; there was a want in his heart never

satisfied, which came up now and then like a cry from the depths;—

"Where is my child, oh, where!" was the secret moan of his life. No child ever came to that house; and few except those who came to do those visits of ceremony, which make up most of the social life of a great city, ever came.

No children ran in to visit in that house,—there were no playthings, no disorder, no confusion; all went as smooth as a clock, and all was as silent; there were no *little* distracting pleasures, or cares, or anxieties, no noises or shoutings, no bother about clothes, and no gossiping about colors or shapes; no parties had to be prepared for or discussed, no one was coming from school or going to college, or bringing in fresh breezes of life from shop or green field, from street or from show. All things went on in quiet and without excitement or interest, and if the truth must be told, it is not easy to make such a household charming.

Even Mrs. Percival with all her study, with all her thought, with all her art, could not do it. But she had won the love of Edward Percival, and her life was not wasted or barren, and her hopes were not blasted. And how could she keep that love? It was the purpose of her life. She spared no pains and no art to keep away from his face the gray shadow, to keep out of his heart the bitter curse.

But some occupation is essential to life, and there were hours of every day when Matilda Percival was weary of herself;—hours when her husband was away from her; hours when she had to remember that after

all her life was not a success. Then she longed, greatly longed for occupation; books were not specially interesting, and the duties of life did not take up either time or thoughts.

There are periods when a sympathetic wave sweeps over a people, unaccountable and subtle. Such a wave flowed over New York about this time, and filled the hearts of such women as Mrs. Percival with a desire to do some good to their fellow-creatures: they who had so much, fancied they wanted to give a *little* to the poor or the despised. They made many efforts, some of them good, some of them foolish; but who will quarrel about what is well meant? There was no organization among these lovely ladies, but each one sought her own methods. It was a very general belief that there was virtue in going away from their own grand luxurious houses into the slums of the city, where vice and wretchedness fester, and so it was not an uncommon thing to see fine carriages and richly dressed ladies at the "Five Points" or "Mackerelville," upon a vague errand of mercy. Possibly the sight of suffering did *them* good, but the effect upon the poor and wretched was to excite envy and bitterness.

"What them fine lady-bugs coming here for with their clothes a draggin' in the mud? What they think we want to see their pink faces for? Do they think we're such fools as to be took-in with their Missy-gab?—'How de do to-day Miss O'Riley—I really hope your side is gettin' better—ye must tak good care o' yerself—good marning Miss O'Riley.' Do they think we want to hear such fiddle-faddle stuff as that! faugh!—let 'em

tak off their duds and go to work as we do, and then let us have some o' their money! faugh for em!"

Such talk as this might have been heard in Cherry street or about Avenue A in the last days of the winter of 18—; but the fine ladies never heard it, and fancied that the poor folks were greatly consoled by their condescending sympathy. Now and then one of these good ladies did more than say fine words. Their wardrobes were sifted and the siftings appeared in these wretched quarters, producing a rather singular effect.

It was a bright sunshiny afternoon of March that Mrs. Percival was out upon one of these errands of mercy, and her carriage was making its way along that district of tenement-houses lying between Tompkins Square and the "Hook." Throngs of dirty children were playing on the sidewalk, and heaps of garbage were now beginning to melt into the air. It was not a pleasant sight certainly; and as Mrs. Percival rode on, she could not but feel a regretful wonder that such multitudes of children should be born to these people who did not want or need them, while to her, such blessings were denied; to her who wanted them, and who could care for them, such blessings were not sent. It was an unaccountable condition of things.

Every one of the poor women who saw the fine lady riding through the sloppy streets in her carriage envied her; they pictured to themselves, what bliss she must enjoy. Ah, well;—everybody fancies *somebody else* is happy! and that keeps one's courage up.

Mrs. Percival was making her way, much to her coachman's disgust, to a certain district in Avenue A,

where she heard of a case of great want, where the whole population indeed were in great misery. She found at last a narrow alley or passage which ran from the street. There she dismounted, and gathering her skirts about her, prepared to plunge. She made her way along it, and presently heard sounds of music, gay and cheerful; they were *not* sounds of wailing, that was certain. She came to a little open court around which high walls were built enclosing narrow and dark quarters. Here was the place of the music. In one corner stood a handsome and youthful Italian whose steeple-crown hat and flowing black beard arrested her eye for a moment. He was playing a gay tune upon his organ, and around him were dancing a dozen of the ragged and dirty imps that find their homes in that quarter. They were dancing with the greatest glee, and the motley sight was heightened by the fact that every one of them had on some piece of worn-out and dirty finery, the most prominent of which were half a dozen cast-off bonnets adorned with bits of flowers and gauze, which some benevolent lady that very afternoon had brought there upon her errand of mercy. Mrs. Percival could not help it, she laughed out as the sight struck her eyes; it was not such a scene of misery as she had expected. She stood for a moment under the dark archway and watched. The player called out now and then,—

"Forward all!"

"Change partners!"

"Hands 'round!"

"Balan'say!"

"Whirl!"

Then her eyes rested upon a young girl, who danced by the side of the organ-player beating a tambourine and singing in a clear childish voice, keeping time with hand and foot. She was small but might be eight or nine years old; her dark eyes were full of glee, and her thick curled hair flew about her face and gave it a piquancy, at once peculiar and fascinating.

A swift thought passed through Mrs. Percival's mind—

"O, that I had such a child as that!"

Again the player stamping the time cried out,—

"Whirl!"

And each child seizing another child, went whirling madly about the court, enjoying the action to the full. Such dancing as this was never seen within the brown walls of the Fifth Avenue. The organ ceased and Mrs. Percival stepped forward:—there was a shrinking and huddling of the little ones into a corner, and only the two players stood their ground.

"God's blessing be on ye my leddy"—said the Juke, "for blessing us wi' yer presence. Ye are an angel right down from the Virgin maybe,—and ye want to do some good to the poor creturs here in the court?"

He took off his high-crowned hat and bowed low. He had fine manners, the Juke had. But truth constrains me to say that while he had the *air* of an Italian Duke, he had not the exact *accent;* and Mrs. Percival was puzzled.

"My good man, pray tell me if you live here—"

"It's the truth and not a lie that I do. I'd scorn to tell a lie to your leddyship."

"Are you from Ireland?" she asked curiously.

"Ye may say it my leddy,—if Ireland is in the blessed Ittely;—and there's where the Virgin"—crossing himself—"was born. I'll say it; and this is the song I sung when I sucked my mother's milk,—

"'Twas on a Christmas morning,
The Saviour was a-borning,
The Holy Land adorning,
All on the Baltic say.

"That's the nate song for ye. An' that's the song I sing when the blessed Christmas tells me the Holy Father's sendin' up his prayers to the blessed Virgin to pray for us. It's my Ittely where they sing this song,—

"The Holy Father's prayin',
To keep us from all strayin',
As I was just a sayin',
All on the Baltic say.

"That's the way they sing in my dear ould Ittely, my leddy."

There was a gleam of fun in his eye which could have come from nowhere except "ould Ireland;"—and if that be really in Italy, it was all right.

Mrs. Percival did not press the matter further.

"Is there a poor widow here with eight children in want?" she asked.

"Oh, ye may say that—*siventeen* widdys of 'em as I'll count up to you on my fingers' ends—ivery mother's son of 'em wid eight children in want of iverything."

This was appalling. Mrs. Percival had come to find *one*, and there were seventeen! The case was hopeless; she abandoned the whole seventeen in despair. The girl stood beside the Juke listening to the lady, and admiring her in all her details; for this child had the quick eye to see, and the quick soul to value perfectness. She thought Mrs. Percival's fine teeth lovely, and her fine muff delightful, and her fine gloves fascinating; and she longed to have such a feather drooping from her head as that which hung from Mrs. Percival's bonnet. The sight of elegance was not likely then to make this little creature contented or happy. And now the lady spoke pleasantly to her,—

"My little girl, do you too live here?"

She gave a little curt'sey and said "yes," in a low voice.

"And what's your name?"

"Luly."

"Luly? Luly what?"

Luly looked up at the lady and then at the Juke.

"Ah, my leddy, she's just my girl, that's all."

"Yours is she?—and what is your name my good man?"

"I am the Juke."

"The Duke—Duke of what?"

"The Juke of Milan, if it so plase ye."

"So this nice little girl is yours? Well, my Luly, would you not like to come and live with me and be my little girl?"

Luly said nothing, she looked down and wondered what the lady meant.

"Ah, my lady, what would become of the fine manly then? Listen now"—

He struck an attitude and played away—Luly touched her tambourine and joined in with her clear little voice, and so they sang and played as was their custom in the dirty streets; it really was delicious.

Percival was charmed, and as she rode away in her carriage, she revolved many things. One was she would surprise Mr. Edward Percival.

XIX.

A FAIRY FROM FAIRY-LAND.

In the chamber of Mrs. Percival of a pleasant evening of April was a curious sight:—a little girl was sitting in a chair receiving the last touches of dress from the hands of Mrs. Percival. Her face was flushed with pleasure and expectation;—her cheek was clean and the rich dark blood shone through the clear skin; the soft waving hair was nicely curled and tied with a crimson band which brought out the shape of a fine head; a small ruffle around that small neck seemed to frame the head, and below that a pretty muslin apron gave effect to a most graceful little figure. Nothing in this lower world is prettier than a pretty little girl,—and this was one of them.

Mrs. Percival was also radiant with pleasure. She never before had had a child in her hands to adorn and love; now she had one. For in some way she had persuaded the Juke and the Misthress that she could and would bless the little waif who had floated to their shore; about which they only knew that she had come to them, sent by the blessed Virgin; and now, no doubt, the same blessed Virgin had sent this fine rich lady to take the child out of want and all possible suffering, to

make her happy and envied. Ah, who knows? Luly could not willingly leave her hearty friends, but it was at last brought about; only she must have "Brit" the dog, he must go:—as wonderful in her eyes he was as in those of Tom Bellows,—who still mourned his lost love.

"Now, my dear Luly, you must call him uncle; and when we go down, you must go to him and give him a kiss, that will make him like you."

Luly assented, for she too wished to be liked. She was in a new and strange world, but if they only loved her it would all be charming. Such beautiful carpets and curtains and pictures and beds, she had never seen; but was it not sorrowful that poor Brit could see none of these, but must be pushed down into the yard, where he had no friends or companions? It is to be feared that Brit sighed for the free quarters of Misthress Mulloy.

Misthress Mulloy did not tell the story of Luly as it was. She invented a sort of pious fraud, how she was the child of a cousin who had died on the passage, and so had come to her. Why should she tell the child,—or tell anybody,—that she was a waif, an outcast, with neither name nor friends? That would never do.

"And Luly," said Mrs. Percival,—"you are now my child and I am your aunt; and if he asks your name, you may say it is Luly Percival, for that's what it is to be after this, you know."

The child was pleased and sat quiet under the loving hands of her new friend. A chance light revealed a new feature or expression, and Mrs. Percival started,—

"Bless me, how like, strangely like Edward! Dear me, what a fancy it was! and after all there's nothing in it." She smiled at her own foolishness and went on arranging and re-arranging.

"I wonder what he will think?" was the question she asked herself. "He has always sighed and longed for a child: I have known it, and now he will have one. But he must never know that this is an Irish child;—no, she's from Italy; so the 'Juke,' as he calls himself, said,—that will be it. He will love her I am sure, she is so nice; but will he not love *me* for bringing her to him?" This was after all the last thought.

Mrs. Percival was busy with these thoughts, and this work of love, when she heard through her open door the front door open, heard her husband's step. Then she heard a low growl.

"Tobbots, what's this! what is this beast doing in my house? Take him out at once!"

"Hinstantly, my Lord. Get hout you brute!" And poor Brit got a kick which sent him howling away. It is certain that ugly dogs receive little kindness except from their owners.

"Oh," whispered Luly,—"tell them not to kick him. He's a good, nice dog and hunts no one but that other dog,"—

The step came up the stairs, came into the chamber. Luly sat there *alone* under the light, for Mrs. Percival wished not to mar the surprise.

For a moment Mr. Percival stood in amazement—

"Why, what's this? Are you a fairy come from Fairy-Land?"

She came toward him. "No, Uncle, I am only a little girl come to see you."

He took her pretty head in his hands and kissed it, and smoothed it, and fondled it. It was an impulse, and he loved the child at once. She was *willing* he should love her, and that made him love her. He seated her on his knee, and laid her head against his breast, and wondered where she came from, and how she came there. It seemed like a fairy story.

It was a pretty picture these two,—father and child, though neither knew it,—brought together in this strange way;—loving one another at once, as if they had known the secret which hung about them. The child sat in quiet and trust;—the man too was quiet, wondering.

Mrs. Percival watched them from her hiding-place, and could not but feel the love that settled about them like an atmosphere. But was she not being forgotten?

She crept up behind them and kissed her husband's forehead—

"Is she not a nice little creature?" she whispered.

He looked up at her,—"Where did she come from, Matilda?"

"I found her."

Then he put up his mouth and gave her a kiss of praise, and thanksgiving.

XX.

NOT PROPER.

Lully pervaded the atmosphere of that silent house, as violets perfume the air. She was not loud or noisy, but the moment Mr. Percival opened the door, he felt her presence or absence. How she came there he did not care closely to inquire;—she was there, and she was a child. That he knew and he cared little more. It was a surprise certainly, that his wife, a stately woman who had her own rigid notions of propriety, should find a child like this in the God-forsaken quarters of the city, and should be willing to take it into her house as her own. That was the marvel. He could not but admire and love her for doing this good deed, and the more because it seemed to be a spontaneous act, not one which he had advised or urged.

The girl seemed at once to take her place in the house. There was a nice little room with white muslin curtains, and a pink toilet-table, and a bird-cage hanging in the window, and a flower-pot on the sill. And then it came about that this child who did not even know how to read was to be taught, and yet she could not be sent to school, she was not to be subjected to such a mortification.

"No, my dear," said Mr. Percival,—"she must learn all these things at home. I will teach her myself."

"Why, Edward, that will be impossible. You cannot be at home in the mornings, and she must have regular hours. You forget that you have never been able to stay at home a whole day except Sunday since we have been married."

"Yes, my dear Matilda—but for the sake of the child I will do anything."

Here was a pang;—he would do already for this waif, this outcast, what he had never thought of doing for her.

"But, my dear Edward,—think of it, it will be impracticable. How would you look turning school-mistress at your time of life! No, we must get a governess, if you do not wish her to go to school."

This idea was not a pleasant one to Mr. Percival. He did not wish any new person to come in, to divide or attract away from him the love of the new child.

"A governess, Matilda! One of those skinny old maids, who always seem to suck the life out of children, vampire-like.—Heaven forbid! Anything but that. Why not teach her yourself, my dear?"

"Why, Edward, you seem to forget. I am not a school-madam, and have never done any such thing. I don't know but I should disgrace myself. Beside that, I have my duties to do, and I do not wish, when *you* come home, to be tired out with teaching."

She took hold of his arm affectionately, and purred a little. He could not resist it, and so he kissed her and went away. But he went feeling sore about it. It really seemed strange that his wife could not do this small thing, but must insist on having another woman brought into the house, sure to be a nuisance to *him*.

Already there were five women in the house to one man; and the bringing in another, who was to be neither lady nor servant, *was* a nuisance;—there was no denying that.

"Unaccountable," thought Mr. Percival, "that a woman like my wife, who has not a bit of *work* in this world to do, should find anything like this a task, and be so ready to decline it."

He sighed;—"but," thought he, "she is a woman, and a spoiled one, and is not to blame for it, I suppose."

He began to be a critic of his wife, and to wish she were something other than the thing she was. And yet that wife had been for years trying to make this man love her, had been training her own nature to fit his, had been making herself loving and affectionate after her methods, so as to call forth a response; and now, when this little girl had been brought to this house to *unite* their souls, the very first movement was one of divergence, not one of union.

"What fancies men have!" was the thought that flitted through the mind of the elegant Mrs. Percival. "That Edward should think I was going to tie myself down with this child, whom I have taken out of the gutter, to please him. But men are so unreasonable where women are concerned; they never think what *we* have to do of any consequence. With all my cares and duties, and with my charities, and my church duties, I have as much to do as anybody ought to do, and if Edward loved me he would certainly see it." She sighed; and thus these two indulged in a little silent criticism which did not promote the happiness of life.

Now, why did not Mrs. Percival at once accept the proposition of her husband?—of the man whom, of all others, she wished to please, wished to hold with the silken string of love about his heart—a string so easy to break, so hard to mend.

Perhaps it was,—was it?—a subtle instinct which whispered to her heart that henceforth she was to be second to this child; whispered it, but so softly that there was not a sound, only a sense, a feeling, a shiver.

It was most strange, that she who lived to please her husband, who studied his thoughts, his wishes, his whims, should not have accepted his suggestions at once, and have acted upon them. No, some unaccountable perversity possessed her, and she went on to do exactly the thing he did not wish done, and which she knew he did not wish done,—and yet she did it.

And it is the experience of all mankind, that these little whimsies are the little sea-worms which riddle the timbers and founder the ship of Matrimony.

Luly, in delightful unconsciousness of all this, in delightful ignorance that she was ignorant, was enjoying her new revelation of life. Her muslin apron seemed to her charming, with its ruffled edge and two lovely little ruffled pockets; and her oval mirror around which the white draperies were clustered and fell, revealed to her as pretty and pleased a face as was to be found in any fine house in all the city. She was so pleased that it was a pleasure to her to look at her own face in the glass.

Pleased people are always handsome,—agreeable at least; and Luly liked herself. She had never dreamed

that she was to have such a pretty room and such pretty clothes; and it was quite a revelation to her that she was herself so pretty. It was a sort of unconscious knowledge too, for she had not yet been told it;—it was only a sensation of beauty which she herself created in her own childish mind.

To enjoy *one's self*,—ah, that is the rarest and the most delicious of sensations;—whatever good we have in us,—to *enjoy* it, without pride and without conceit. That, children do and grown people do not;—and so grown people are fools and children are the unconscious wisdom of God. Luly did this;—*she enjoyed herself*—and as the bird sang in the window its joyful trills, Luly's voice sang out its happiness,—

"La la, la;—tra la la;—tra la, la-la;—la la la;—trala la la"—

Then it took the shape of words,—most likely one of those penny ballads which she had learned to sing with the Juke.

"Trust him not, O gentle lady,
Though his voice be low and sweet,
Heed not him who kneels before thee,
Softly pleading at thy feet.
Now thy life is in its morning,
Cloud not this thy happy lot;
Listen to the Gipsy's warning—
Gentle lady, trust him not."

"Lady, turn not from me coldly,
For I have only told the truth;
From a stern and withering sorrow,
Lady, I would shield thy youth;

I would shield thee from all danger,
Shield thee from the Tempter's snare;
Lady, shun the dark-eyed stranger:
I have warned thee—now, beware!!"

The pleasant sounds ran all through the house and struck upon Mrs. Percival's ear as she was arranging herself before the glass, about to go after that governess. Such a sound never before was heard in that house, and it was delicious. Mrs. Percival listened:—

"That's a fine organ—has great capabilities,"—she said to herself;—"by and by I must get Battine to take it in hand and get it into shape."

If you do, Mrs. Percival, you will do a very foolish thing;—now, the child sings like a *bird*, and the half-training you will give her, will not get her through the slough, into the heaven of art, where she will sing like an *angel*. But Luly, all unconscious, sang on in her divine and childlike way, and then Mrs. Percival went forth to do her duty by that child,—that duty being to find her a governess.

XXI.

ONLY A MAN.

The governess came of course, and Luly was buckled into the harness whatever it was, and was taught to pull the load she put upon her. The girl had never done this kind of work, and at first it was most difficult, most toilsome; but she had the natural aptitude which makes *young* girls so delightfully teachable, so charmingly eager to know. The governess proved to be a good, kind woman, and not one of the skinny old maids, anticipated by Mr. Percival; but she was what is called in New England "rather slack." Mrs. Percival felt it her *duty*, to keep her and to keep Luly up to the mark. She had the eyes of a lynx, and the will of a Tartar. Here was a child which she had transplanted from a foul den into a beautiful flower garden, and she was determined that she should bloom into the very finest flower that could be produced. She did not know, however, that potatoes never bear roses, nor roses violets. So she saw her; she examined her books, she sat in the room, she directed here and corrected there; she spent more time upon Luly in this way than she would have spent in teaching her, and she made herself as disagreeable as a woman well could, both to teacher and pupil by her incessant

interference and "bossing." And there it is; a woman with slow or cold sympathies should have nothing to do with children, or else should cultivate and warm those sympathies into life, so that she may deserve their companionship. Mrs. Percival, poor lady, did not know this, because this story was not then written; she only knew that she meant to do her duty and make this little girl into a perfect woman,—one who would attract the world and glorify her.

Mrs. Percival had never before felt the sweet pressure of duty,—at least of duty where she could be supreme. She had duties toward her husband certainly, but he maintained his own mastership, while here was a child over which she was absolute mistress; and if she did not exercise this supremacy, she felt she would be derelict. So she did it, and it may not surprise the world to know that she over-did it.

Luly was now nine or ten years old, and had an individuality of her own to see to and protect. She was fond of Mrs. Percival and grateful—sometimes, and always called her Aunty, and rarely cried; but sometimes she thought with regret of the dirty little court in Avenue A, and the dirty little children and the hearty loud-voiced Misthress Mulloy whom she had called "mother;"—though she knew she was not her mother, but only her friend. Then she sought Brit, who lived down in the backyard a life of melancholy elegance; no pigs to chase, no curs to fight, no bull-terriers to chew his stumps of ears, no children to rampage with:—this now was not the life to which he had been educated.

He laid his head on Luly's lap and rolled it about and whined, and whimpered his satisfaction at human love and companionship.

"I know, Brit,—I know about it;—I know you want to have a race with that big pig of the grocer's;—I've heard him squeal many a time,"—

Brit whined,—

"I know about that dirty old dog in the junk-man's cart;—he almost eat you up, Brit—you remember that?"—

He whined in sympathy.

"No, you must not fight him any more,—*it's not proper*, not at all, Brit; no gentleman does so."—

Brit looked into her face as she put on the authoritative manner of Mrs. Percival.

"It's not proper, and my aunty says you must do nothing but what's *proper:*—do you hear, Brit?"

He whimpered as though he understood it all.

"Now, you have good victuals and good clothes,—no, not clothes,—but a good house and a lovely back-yard; and you must be grateful to me and love me for what I have done for you, and be a good dog and mind everything *I* say, and then when you die you will be an angel."—

She laughed out at her own talk so like what she had heard in her new home; and especially at Brit's being an angel.

"How funny he would be with wings on, and no sitting-down place—ha-ha!"

Suddenly Brit broke from her, he ran about and worked his stumpy ears, and his short tail was as stiff

as a ramrod; and then he barked out a sharp, quick bark of recognition—"bow, wow, wow." He looked at his mistress as much as to say,

"Don't you hear that?"

"What is it, Brit?"

He ran to the door and whined.

Then Luly heard the sound of a street organ, and she ran through the hall crying "the Juke, the Juke!"

She opened the front door quite forgetful of what was *proper*, and Brit was after her, equally forgetful; down they ran, and there, sure enough, was the Juke, with his organ, and his monkey, and his elegant black beard, and his velvet jacket and his brigand legs, all just the same.

Luly threw her arms around him and kissed his ruddy old face; and Brit ran about his legs; and then

"Half drew they him,
Half sunk he in"—

to that open hall door, quite oblivious that Jukes of that kind do not go into halls of that kind. In they three went, and up into Luly's room they sped:—

"See," cried Luly,—"see, Juke, this is mine; this little bed is mine, and this little pitcher, and this hair-brush, and this mirror; and here are my new frocks, and this apron,—don't you think that's pretty?—and those boxes, these are mine, and I read now, Juke;—and how is the dear old Misthress, and Jim and Mike and all of them?—Here, you must take this to the Misthress, and this to Mike, and this to"——She was heaping things into his

hand when the door opened and Mr. Tobbots' stately figure appeared.

The Juke took off his hat and made a lowly reverence as "Jukes do in Ittely"—sure that this elegant man was Mr. Percival himself;—

"God save your honor, and may ye live to die and go among the blessid, who play on harps and sing songs to the Holy Virgin all the days o' the year on the beautiful Baltic say."

Mr. Tobbots was grave if not severe:—"Miss Lucy," he spoke with a suppressed grief,—"Miss Lucy, your Haunt won't like this 'ere; gentlemen in ladies' chambers is not proper; indeed it's quite hextraordinary, and gentlemen with dogs is most hextraordinary of all. It's never permitted in the upper classes. You must go hout, my man, hinstantly."

He held open the door, and waved his hand with dignity.

The Juke was going—saying only "good-bye, my Luly—be a good girl, and pray to the blessed Virgin, and she'll see to ye—good-bye!"

"What is that, Tobbots?" was the voice of Mrs. Percival from below.

"honly a man, my lady, got into Miss Lucy's chamber;—a forring man, my lady, with a monkey and a dog;—honly a man, my lady."

"Only a man!" exclaimed the surprised lady, running up the stairs—"and a monkey and a dog;—good heavens!"

The Juke met her at the head of the stairs, and with his most elegant manner said—"God bless all in this

house;—and may the tap niver run dry nor the ile get low,—and may the blessed Virgin keep the roses a bloomin' so fine on your cheeks as they do this day, till the poor Juke meets ye and the child with harps in yer hands all made of solid goold singin' songs around the throne, and all the angils sittin' round listening, dressed in their red petticoats and blue shawls as beautiful as they are the day in the windees of the Holy Church o' Saint Marg'rit,—long life to yer lady."

The Juke meant to cover his retreat with a running fire of compliments and Italian blarney, and so placate the possible censure of the lady and save Luly.

"Why Miss Lucy! why Juke!" was all she could say for a moment.

"Yes, my lady, it's jest as I was sayin',—it's a beautiful song for the blessed Virgin that I was singin' in yer honor, when the little child here—bless her heart,—wanted to show me all the beautiful things ye had given her,—bless yer noble and illegant heart that's as full of red blood this day as an egg is o' mate, and allways a beatin' for the glory of God and the love of men, as fast as the thrip-hammer thumps away down there to the Novilty Wurks iv'ry day of the year,—and more lovely and beautiful things niver was seen this side paradise, an' that I'll say to Misthress Mulloy; and the house is full of angils while yer in it, an' there's not an angil in heaven equal to yer lady, barrin' the blessed Virgin herself maybe,"—crossing himself; "and this night I'll say a prayer for ye and burn the blessed candle that Father O'Reilly blessed for me that last day when we went to see the Lord a risin'. Och, the fine day it was,

with the music all over, comin' from nobody knows where, and little Luly's voice singin' out 'O, Dominy dominy,' as pretty as a bird,"—

All this time the Juke was making his way down the stairs followed by Mrs. Percival, and she by Tobbots, and he by Luly, and she by Brit, and nobody could say a word, for the stream that flowed out of the perennial spring which was in the Juke's heart.

"An' now, my lady,"—with a low bow—"I'll tell Misthress Mulloy of yer glory and goodness, and the queen of Sheby 's nothing to yerself this day, glory be to God!"

And so the Juke got away, and Mrs. Percival expressed to poor Luly her surprise, and made a profound statement that such things "were not proper, not at all."

XXII.

A LITTLE JEALOUS.

Time passed.

Is it surprising that a child sometimes loves a man more than a woman?

It need not be, when one remembers that all day long a woman,—and in a city especially,—is shut into a house with the child; is obliged to hush, and correct, and hector it the livelong day, until both woman and child are quite tired out and mutually disgusted. I say it is not surprising that a child does sometimes love a man best. Man certainly is not a very lovable animal, but he is more lovable to a child than to any creature except a dog.

It will not surprise you therefore to learn that Luly did love Mr. Percival better than Mrs. Percival; and it will not surprise you that Mrs. Percival knew it and was slightly irritated by it.

"You quite spoil that child, Edward; I declare it does not do to be fondling and kissing so much; it somehow gets one into bad habits and dissipates the mind. I am sure when I was a child it was not the custom of *my* father, and I can easily see that a girl accustomed to such things might get to expect it, and by and by

expect it from other gentlemen; I am sure, Edward, it's not proper, and you will oblige me if you will not do it."

"Why, my dear, what a curious fancy! What am I to do? How *many* times do you think it will be proper to kiss her?—Come?"

He was inclined to make light of it, but not so Mrs. Percival:—women are so dreadfully in earnest, if in earnest at all.

"I wish you would not talk so, Mr. Percival, and before Luly too. It is strange how little consideration you have for what I say. It seems to me that *I* ought to know better than a man what is proper and what is not proper. And then you must remember that Luly is my child, and that I must have something to say about her education. Now, Edward, do be reasonable and pay attention to what I say. I am sure you must see that I am right."

Mr. Percival was very far from seeing it, but as "discretion is the better part of valor," he kept his mouth shut and dropped the subject.

As to this matter, Mrs. Percival as you perceive was a goose, though she did not dream of it, and her husband did not say it:—but she was allowing a little feeling of jealousy to creep in, which might, and sometimes indeed it does, poison the air of the whole house.

To be watched is not agreeable to mortal man, woman or child; and whoever is watched and knows it, will certainly fight or run or cheat. Now this weight of duty which rested upon Mrs. Percival led her to keep a watchful eye upon Luly, and the feeling of jealousy led her to keep a watchful eye upon Mr. Percival, and a

fear that they two might conspire against her led her to be watchful of them both. These pernicious feelings grew, and grew stronger with what they fed on. The lady had no other interests, no other occupations but these, and they insidiously filled the empty house. They were the seven devils which entered in and dwelt there.

Mr. Percival, finding badinage did not dispel the slight cloud, left it to time and silence to dissipate it. He sought Luly when he came into his house rather than his wife, perhaps unconsciously; he talked with her and interested himself in her doings and feelings; and as day by day she grew older and her mind unfolded, they two became more and more companionable and loving.

They grew to be alike, and it is not strange that the lithe, budding, young creature, with her hopes and expectations, and all her freshness and life shining out in eye, cheek, voice, and action, should have charmed the lonely and disappointed man. It is not strange that in her outspoken, spontaneous talk and song he found a most intense satisfaction; it is not strange that he should have loved to please her who was now so easy to please; and indeed it is not strange that by a silent and sure process, the love and fondness which had once found expression toward his wife, should have transferred itself to this girl; it was inevitable. Man and wife might have centered their loves in her, while a thorough good understanding and fellowship should have tied them together; but it was not so to be.

Mrs. Percival found the husband and the child together in all ways and places. Sometimes it was in

her husband's dressing-room, sometimes in Luly's own room, sometimes in the library, and now and then after long and anxious searching, upon the roof of the house watching the golden sunset clouds. She might be sitting in his lap reading to him, or he to her; or she might be curling and combing his hair, now beginning to be streaked with gray; or they might be working over a little bit of water-color:—anything sufficed to employ and unite these two, because they wanted to be in harmony, and had no fears, or distrusts, or plans.

But Mrs. Percival, poor lonely woman as she was getting to be, was not one with them; she did not spontaneously fall into their life; she was more rigid, more afflicted with her sense of duty and propriety; could not or would not understand that her way was not the best, indeed the only way; could not understand, that after all, she was but a second-rate person, demanding to be accepted as a first-rate one; and so she went on worrying her poor heart, and adding fuel to the flame which was beginning to consume her. It was a terrible pity.

"Really, Mr. Percival, I cannot see what you and Luly have so much to do with one another for. Half the time I do not know where to look for you;—you get out of the way so strangely.

"Why, my dear, we do not get into any mischief, and never into the sweetmeat closet, so I don't see that we do any harm." Playfulness did not meet the case.

"I was not talking of harm, Edward, you must see that; but something is due to me:—*I* ought to be consulted and considered. *I* am the person who found

Lucy, and have had most of the care and anxiety of her bringing up; and I must say she is on the whole a good child and I do not regret what I have done, not the least. But there are certain proprieties which ought to be observed and you are altogether too careless about them; really, Edward, you are, you must see that;—"

He had smiled slightly as if to pooh-pooh the matter, but it did not do.

"No, Edward, *I* know; I am a woman of the world and I know. It is not proper, not at all, for Lucy to be hanging about you so much as she does, and you ought not to encourage it. A certain measure of fondling may be well enough, but now Lucy is growing to be a large girl, and she is not your child you know."

He waved his hand deprecatingly.

"No, Mr. Percival, if she is anybody's she is mine; and I wish to, and mean to do the best I can for her; and you must admit that I have so far. She has had every advantage, and her masters say there is not a finer girl, not in all the city. Her French is very good indeed, and her dancing, Mr. Pompelli says, is quite equal if not superior to the Princess Royal's. I begin to feel quite satisfied with what I have done, and I do hope, Mr. Percival, that you will not spoil her, and undo all I have done. I merely speak of this, Edward,—it may not seem much to you,—but it *is* very important; and I hope you will see it so."

"I only ask, Matilda," he replied to all this, "that you will not make a toil of pleasure; Luly is a good child and loves us as if she were our own, and we love her; she has been the greatest blessing and delight to us, and

for Heaven's sake let us enjoy her, and let her enjoy us. She has almost made me young again, and I have forgotten all the bitterness of my life when with her sunshiny spirit. Thank God for her, as I do, and try to be worried about nothing so long as she is with us to bless our house. I love her as the apple of my eye."

"Yes, yes, Edward, I know all this,—these generalities are all very well; but you don't seem to see that something more is to be done, than playing and kissing, and being young and foolish. I am sure *my* father never was so free with me, his own daughter, as you are with Luly;—and I do beg you will be more thoughtful of what *I* say."

"Oh very well, very well,—we won't talk about it any more," he said with some impatience. He did not swear, nor tell his wife she was getting to be a bore, nor fling out of the room and bang the door and go off to a billiard saloon; nor did he propose to get drunk, nor smoke the room so full as to pain her eyes and so drive her out. None of these things. He took his book and read on in silence. And she, conscious that she had put things right in his mind, went to see about Luly's clothes or her own, or to shop for something very important to match.

Dear me—"right in his mind!" All was wrong,—wrong as it could be. He was bursting with suppressed impatience, and did not know a word of what he was reading; but he kept his eyes on the book and shut his teeth grimly. He read on and on, but all was a blank.

The door opened and a curled head peered in; the dark witchy eyes sparkled and smiled.

"You here, uncle?" she whispered.

Then all his face cleared, the clouds vanished, the sunshine without warmed to life the sunshine within.

"Come in, come in, my child;" he smiled upon her, and she rushed into his arms, and pressed his cheek and his mouth. He smoothed her hair with his hand and said a pleasant word, wondering what she wanted; for she had a way of nestling close to him when she had some little trouble or wish to express, which he instinctively understood.

"Uncle, do you know that Tobbots says,—that he says,—says, that Brit must not come into the house any more, and that he must not come up into my room at all, and that he is to feed him and not I? Now don't you think it's very cruel?—because Brit has been my dog for ever so long, and he loves me, and I love him; and I do believe, uncle, he will starve to death if I don't feed him and talk to him sometimes. I do indeed, uncle."

"Pooh-pooh! Who told Tobbots to say so? Not I."

"O no, uncle, not you,"—

"Who then?"

She hesitated,—"*He* says aunty did."—

"Nonsense, I guess not,—I'll see about it."

She still sat in his arms with her head on his shoulder. After a little—

"Uncle,"—

"Well, child, say it out,"—

"Don't you think I might go to school now?"

"Go to school! Why you are getting to be such a little scholar already that I can't keep up with you."

"No, no,—it's not that."

"What is it then?"

"Why it's—it's,—don't you think, uncle, it would be pleasant to know some other girls?"

He laughed:—"*I* don't want to know any other girls, as long, Luly, as I have you."—

She laughed:—"No, but you are not a girl, uncle. You see I don't know anybody but myself and I am getting tired of myself; and I see so many nice girls going along, I think it would be nice to know them, and I wonder what they talk about, for they always talk, and I wonder whether they love anybody as much as I love you, and I wonder what they know, and whether they have any brothers and sisters, and what they do after school, and whether they go down to the sea-shore in the summers as we do and where, and whether they have dogs, or birds, or what, and who makes their clothes and whether they ever learn to sew, and whether they sing or not, and"—

"Now, there Luly," said Mr. Percival, "I am almost out of breath. So you fancy you would like to go to a school?"

"I am sure I should, because I know enough not to be ashamed of myself, and I want to know what a school is like;"—

"But I am afraid, Luly, if you should go, that you would love all those girls, and then you would not love your aunty and me, eh?"

She put her arms around his neck, and hid her face on his cheek, and remonstrated,

"Oh, uncle!"

He petted her, and said he would see, and then they had a pleasant time of it.

That night, when Mr. Percival was about going to bed, he said—calmly and firmly,—

"Matilda, I wish Luly to take care of Brit, and to allow him to visit her in her room when she pleases; and I expect Tobbots will not interfere with what does not concern him."

"Just as you think best, Edward; but really ——"

"We will not discuss it, Matilda."

The matter dropped therefore.

It was the next morning that he said to Mrs. Percival, rather suggestively,

"You once advised Luly's going to school; do you think it might be best now?"

"Why, Edward, you know what my views were, but you overruled them, and I did not press them of course; but I have never changed my views; that I could not do. I could suspend them out of regard for you, as I did; for you know, Edward, I always do; but my views remain the same. I would never have spoken of it if you had not, but now that you have spoken, I must say that I think you made a great mistake, a fatal mistake." She strengthened the *you*.

"Well, I take it you would advise her going now?"

"As to that, Mr. Percival," she said, considerately, "it depends upon circumstances. I have done the very best I could with the child, and I think *you* will admit that. As to what I shall do now, I hardly know."

Mr. Percival saw that his wife was assuming the superior and the injured person a little, so he forbore to

press the matter then. But it came up again, and finally it was carried ;—for there were reasons other than Luly's wish. One of them was, that it would take the girl out of the house, give her new friends and interests, and thus wean her away from Mr. Percival, around whose heart she now twined, and whose love she engrossed altogether too much.

Mr. Percival saw with sad eyes that his wife was jealous of the unsuspecting girl, was becoming hard and harder upon her every day, and was growing more and more suspicious and intolerant; now and then a dreadful thought came into his mind,—that this child who had been lost and saved and loved, might be a curse; might yet be the unwilling, unconscious curse of his life, of all their lives, even of her own. The thought filled him with an indefinable fear, from which there seemed no escape.

XXIII.

SQUIRE BOSTWICK'S DAUGHTERS.

Let us go back for a while in this curious narrative. At the pleasant town of Milford things went on as before; for any strange thing rarely comes to pass in such places:—to be born, to marry and to die are the three great events; and as they are constantly happening, the inhabitants have always something to interest them, and something to talk about too.

Brigham's, as we have seen, was the most attractive place in the town; for there whatever news was stirring could be heard.

You remember Jake. Well, he was sitting smoking a pipe in Sol Brigham's bar-room.

"I tell you what, they say Tom Eustis is goin' to marry Squire Bostwick's gal."

"What?"—asked another,—"the parrot-toed one?"

No, the other one, the fat one:—and a nicer gal than she ain't in all the river bottom,"—

"Nonsense!"—broke in Brigham;—"Nonsense! What should he marry her for? Squire Bostwick lives like a fighting cock and earns the money he spends, but he hain't got a thousand dollars in the bank and never will have,—that is what I say!"

"Now Sol, what's that got to do with it?—If he loves her and she loves him, what's the odds? I tell you he'll marry her;—what's that got to do with it?"

Jake and old Sol were never in accord; they differed and that made talk.

"What's that got to do with it? It's got everything to do with it,—that's what I say. A pinter don't go to huntin' possums, and fish-hawks don't scratch round barn-doors. And I tell you Tom Eustis won't marry Squire Bostwick's fat girl;—that's what I say."

"Why not? Come, why not? She's about the nicest piece in town, and gets her bonnets straight from York twice a year. There ain't a gal that sings out in meeting louder 'n she, I tell you. I see Tom hangin' round there, and if he ain't going to marry her, what's that for? I say he'll marry her."

"Not a bit of it,"—answered Brigham. "He's got other game in his eye, but what is it? What is it? Dog me if I can make it out. He's a close one, Tom is;—that I'll say."

"I vow, it beats all," said Jake, willing to turn the conversation to some other topic where there was more room for speculation,—"it beats all how Tom Eustis has got on. The old folks all went to rack and ruin after that gal of theirs went to the bad,—and nobody ever heerd what came of her, not as I could find; and Tom was as nigh gone straight to the Devil as ever a feller was, and then all at once he starts up and turns round and stops drinkin' and spreein' and gamblin' and raisin' hell generally, and goes to meetin' twice a Sunday, and saves his money, and buys out that 'are saw-mill,

and sets up a grist-mill, and there ain't a thriven'er feller in all the town. It beats all, and I could never see how he got his money to start with, I couldn't. It is all luck that's what it is,—it's all luck."

"Luck be hanged!" said old Brigham. "Why don't everybody have luck sometime, eh? It's all nonsense!"

"They do, if they wait long enough."

"Sa, sa!" exclaimed Brigham, impatiently—"Nonsense! *Wait* for it? Just seize luck by the throat and make it stand and deliver,—that's what *I* say."

"Now, Sol, you talk like,—well, if 'twant you, I'd say you talked like a durned fool; but, anyway, if it wan't luck, what was it? Where did Tom Eustis get a thousand dollars to pay down when he bought that mill—tell me that, eh? Where 'd he get that?"

Old Sol was evidently stumped, for he could not answer. He puffed his pipe, ruminating, and the rest waited a moment for the oracle to speak, while Jake enjoyed the consciousness of having posed old Brigham; it was sweet to the soul.

"It was kind o' cur'ous," said old Sol, slowly.

"Cur'ous? I should say it *was* cu'rous," interrupted Jake, with a triumphant voice. "If there ain't no luck, I should like to know how you're goin' to 'count for anything in this world, by George!"

"It was kind o' cur'ous,"—went on Brigham, not hearing the irreverent remarks of the opposite party. "When he came back that time he'd been on an awful spree, and Pudgeon told me his horse was as nigh blowed as ever he'd had a horse, just knocked up. But

Tom shelled out a fifty dollar bill, and so Pudgeon nursed up the mare and got her well. But that was the last spree Tom ever had. He just turned square round, and I say he hain't drank a drop since. And that is the way to do," moralizing:—"if a man's got a fire in his belly he'd better take to water and let fire alone. Tom's no fool, that I'll say; Tom Eustis ain't no man's fool. Just where he'd been that time, and where he got his money, and why he turned pious and quit all the devil's ways, I never could find out. He's no man's fool, Tom Eustis ain't, that I'll say!"

"Turned pious?" asked one; "has he gone in then all over under?"

"Well no, maybe not," replied Sol. "But pious enough to keep his wheels greased and make 'em run easy. Tom knows enough to know that he'd better train with the Lord's scamps than with the Devil's scamps. There aint money enough among these shiftless, God-forsaken cusses that never see the inside of a church, to keep a good-sized teakettle running, much less the water to bile an engine; I tell you Tom Eustis wants money and means to have it, and he can't get it out of the Devil's poor—that's what *I* say."

They greeted this with a good loud ha, ha! though to tell the truth most of them belonged to the Devil's poor. But the Devil's poor always manage to laugh most.

"Well," said Jake to keep up his side, "that's what I call luck,—it jest happened;—most of such go to the Devil, and it was all luck turned Tom round. Well, he's round any way, but I say he'd never ha' got round,

and made the money he has if it had not been for luck."—

"Luck! " said Sol,—"I say, he attends to things and sees to 'em, and you never catch him sitting round in a bar-room smoking pipes, and washing it down with whiskey,—not he. Not as I say he's any *better* than anybody, but he'll get what he's after, that I say. But now what *is* he after? Not Squire Bostwick's fat girl, not if Sol Brigham knows;—not he. No, he's after something, but I'm blowed if I can see what."

"Maybe he's got a gal in the city,—who knows?" suggested one of the milder brethren doubtfully.

"I've thought of that," said Sol; "but he don't go there often enough. No, if a man's got a girl anywhere, where he can't see her any day, he's always cutting off to get at her at odd times. No, 'tain't that, for Tom don't go to the city more'n twice a year. He had a fellow up here once, and they said it was a policeman,—what for nobody knew; but I always thought he'd had his pocket picked there. Most of these country fellows do get their pockets picked when they go down;—and it's my opinion that a man had better stay to home, that's what *I* say."

"Well," said Jake,—"if Tom Eustis is after a city gal, she'll make his money fly; I'll tell him that for a quarter, any minute. There was one of 'em up here last summer,—you remember her, Sol?—that tall one, 'Hanner' they called her,—'Hanner Landreth,' from Philadelphy.—Well, by George! if she hadn't trunks as big as that counter there, blast me!—She just had white frocks, and blue frocks, and yellow frocks, and

green frocks, and petticoats with ruffles round the bottoms;—Lord! it did make the young fellers' mouth water;—and when she stepped, Lord!"—Jake gave a rude imitation of a fine lady's walk,—"Lord, you ought to heerd her sayin'—O Mister Brigham, reely it is so very dirty here in the rooral distreeks—Oh—reely Mister Brigham, you ought to have pavements, you reely ought. You ought to move your hotel down to the city, Mr. Brigham, reely its very offensive; and the sun shines in one's face so, Mr. Brigham, quite intolerable, quite. It never doos so in the city, Mr. Brigham—but in the rooral distreeks the people air so unsofisticated, deer me! oh!"

Jake was a rude but effective mimic, and his efforts at ridicule made them laugh heartily. But as long as Miss Landreth did not know it she did not care, and they had their fun with her.

In this pleasant way these rural swains whiled away their evening hours. Amongst them appeared a new figure, who hushed their fun. It was none other than Mr. Thomas Eustis, who entered from the street, took a lamp from the counter, and said as he went to his room gravely,—

"Anything new, Mr. Brigham?"

"Nothing, nothing; what should there be new here? You may tell us some maybe?"

"No, there is nothing stirring;—a heavy drift of logs came down to-day, and some few escaped, but nothing to speak of, nothing of moment."

Tom Eustis was converted from a young and dissipated fellow, into a serious man who had plans and pur-

poses. Whether or no one of these was to marry Squire Bostwick's fat daughter we may doubt, as Sol Brigham did. He had grasped the world, there where he stood, and intended to make it pay him tribute in one shape or another. Since that eventful night when a devilish laugh had sang the lullaby of Edward Percival whom he hated, he had sought and sought and sought in vain for some tidings of that sister, who was loved and lost; for while he had been young and wild and reckless he had loved that sweet and tender-hearted sister dearly, and she had loved him, had been hopeful and proud for him, until the black clouds settled upon her and upon all of them; and then she had hoped no more,—she had died. But Eustis did not know that she was dead; he suffered because he did not know it; and he sought an atonement for the wicked wrong that had been done. From whom? from Edward Percival, the man who had done the wicked wrong? He knew that Edward Percival was not dead, that he was rich and respectable and envied; and he bided his time. Why did he not kill him? That was but a poor revenge; no, a keener and more bitter, more subtle punishment than that should come. But when and how? This was the purpose which now filled his mind, it was this which steadied his life; for without *some* purpose no life can be great. Merely to eat and to drink and to die may consist with goodness, but with greatness never. It was this purpose which had changed a rollicking, baddish boy, into a decent and goodish man. Was he the *better* for the change? Not a whit; but he was more respectable.

Mr. Eustis had his rooms with Brigham, and as he

went into the entry, candle in hand, old Sol followed him.

"We did hear a bit of news, Mr. Eustis, though like-as-not it's no news to you; and it's none o' our business anyway; but we can't help, you know, liking to know what's going on with our friends. It's a poor friend that cares nothing for nobody—that's what *I* say."

The old man had a sort of liking for the young one, who had had so hard an experience so early; and he was ready to express his sympathy and good-will, even if he was going to marry Squire Bostwick's fat daughter.

"Well, what is it, Brigham?" asked Tom.

"They say you've been looking round for a partner and found one,"—

"What, in the mill?"

"Hardly, hardly;—though she'll get her share on't I'm thinking,—they generally does."

"O, it's a woman is it? Who do they say she is?"

"Squire Bostwick's daughter."

"Which one?—not the parrot-toed one?"—

"No;—I said, hang me if it's that one; no, the fat one; she's the one; and if she is I wish,"—

"Say no more, Brigham," said Eustis laughing, "that card won't win;—say no more."

The old fellow grasped his hand,—"Hang me on a tree if I am not glad on't. It's no use a fine young fellow like you, just sailed out of port, draggin' a tender round the first voyage;—wait till you get back, wait awhile, that's what *I* say."

"So say I," chimed in Tom. "But now, Sol, you

may say I am going to put it off awhile at your advice, —at *your* advice, Sol;—and when I come back, we'll talk it over."

"Come back! and where are you going this time?" asked Brigham.

"Only to the city for a little visit."

"And when shall I have a chicken ready for you?"

"Maybe a week, maybe a month."

"Well good-bye, anyway."

"Good-bye, Sol."

XXIV.

A WALK AND A SURPRISE.

Nobody notices a plain country-dressed man in the streets of New York, certainly not unless he is very strange and very outlandish in his dress. Mr. Percival was not likely to notice such a man, whom he met as he walked away from his house on a fine cool Novemberish morning;—why should he? He had kissed Luly in the entry where she was getting on her things to go to school,—which had proved a revelation of life and of enjoyment. She was in gay spirits, so was he, for Mrs. Percival was not present, and therefore they were free.

It is a painful thing to say it, but truth compels. Mrs. Percival now was a trial to herself, to Mr. Percival, and to Luly. She saw everything through a jaundiced eye, and made the worst, not the best of things. It was intolerable. Her husband sometimes wondered how he could escape, how Luly could get away from the persistent presence, which was beginning to check the currents of her young life. He could do nothing, she could do nothing,—but bear and live on with such patience as they had, and find such satisfaction with one another as they could. Hoping almost against hope, it was with him.

'Remember," said Luly as they parted, "I shall expect you to take a walk with me this afternoon. I shall come down Broadway to Grand street, then I shall go across to the Bowery and down the Bowery, and you must walk up that way,—at four o'clock,—remember."

He walked away with a springy step, for the pleasant voice of the girl always stirred his heart with strange memories, or inspirations of youth and hope and happiness. He did not know why;—he could not know.

Luly too went on her way up the street with her books; and as she went on with that soft waving walk, which girls who are just coming into womanhood have, she had a pleasant spirit haunting her, and she sang or hummed little snatches of song to herself;—they expressed her happiness. The fresh air was pleasant, her own motion was pleasant, she was going away from her home, which was pleasant too:—why should she borrow trouble or anticipate evil? It was not in her nature to do it.

Why should he?—No, walk on, Mr. Percival, indulge in pleasant thoughts while you can; you have had enough of bitter ones, you will have more.

He saw no country-looking man, and indeed hardly saw anybody, for his thoughts were about Luly, and just then they were pleasant.

But the country-dressed man walked close to him, and caught a good look at his handsome though saddened face. But now that face expressed pleasure, not pain. It found no response in the face of the other;

quite the contrary. He clenched his hands in his pockets, and muttered in his teeth,—

"Damn him! So he lives on, and has houses and money, and wives, and children, and all the rest, and cares nothing for those *he* has cursed! Damn him! I say. He shall know what misery and disgrace are, and *I* will make him know;—I, Tom Eustis, will bring his head to the ground, and hold it there till he bites the dust and fills his belly with it. I will know it, and see it with my own eyes, and Sarah Eustis shall know it alive or dead, and his wife shall know it, and his children—all, all, shall know it; and I will curse him before their faces!"

These were not pleasant or Christian thoughts and purposes, which so shaped themselves in the heart of Mr. Tom Eustis, as he walked up toward the fine house which had the name, "Edward Percival," on the door. He saw the girl descend the steps and walk away:—

"Yes" said he, "there's one of them, the devil's brood. Let's see what she is like." He walked on, passed her, and then caught sight of her bright charming face.

"Yes, she's one of them, not a doubt of that;—the same nose, the same chin. Ha ha! I will stab him through her,—stab him under the fifth rib,—'How are you, brother?' Brother! Brother! *She* had a brother:—had he ever a sister? He has a daughter,—ha ha!"

He followed her as she tripped along, murmuring to her own pleasant soul, pleasant snatches of melody. God seems to have intended his creatures to sing, but few, except the birds, do it. She tripped along careless and

gay:—sufficient for the day was the *good* thereof,—that was the sentiment which filled his veins; and who cries *evil?* Preposterous and acrid was the soul who said every day was evil and full of evil;—out upon it!

Perhaps she had a thought, and a pleasant one too, of the pleasant walk she would have this afternoon and the pleasant stroll through the streets with her good kind uncle whom she loved so well.

And he—who walked along, following her? he hummed no pleasant tune to his soul, had no warm red blood coursing through his veins carrying love and good-will to all,—to brain, eye and hand; he followed her, grim and inveterate;—for hatred never makes good red blood, or provokes smiles, or secures soft dimpling skins. No, it needs love to do that; and Thomas Eustis had now no love in his heart. This girl he had never before seen, never known; how could he hate her? He hated her because he hated *him*, and he would not spare her, if through her he might strike him.

Where were the angels that they did not whisper in his ear, and say in words that he would believe:—

"She is your sister's child,—the only daughter of that sister you loved so well, the playmate of your childhood, the companion of your youth, the pride of your first manhood:—spare her, spare her—and love her,—love her for *her* sake, who was once as young and happy and lovely as this young thing now is,"—

Where were the angels of God that they did not whisper this in his ear, now so closed to pity?

They were not there; no such soft whisperings were heard:—he tramped on, saw her run up the steps of her

school, saw her disappear in the door. But he will see her again.

Then he turned and walked back, and up and down, surveying the house of the man he hated;—but he saw nothing more, nothing to allay his passion. He looked at his watch;—

"Past ten,—hum"—

He now struck across the city toward the Bowery, down the Bowery, and through Rivington street until he came to Cannon street. He turned down Cannon street without stopping,—until he came near one of the largest houses of this doubtful part of the city. He waited a moment and watched; no policeman was in sight, no one whom he need care for; then he hastily ran up the steps, gave three taps on the door; it was opened at once and he disappeared.

XXV.

"LULY! LULY!"

It had not been a good day for Mr. Edward Percival. He had been occupied to be sure all the day, but his occupation had not seemed to lift an indefinable weight which had depressed him, and weighed upon his spirit. All things were going well, and yet it was not until after noon when he heard of a safe arrival of an important India ship in the bay, in which was to be a soft white India dress for his Lucy, that his spirits rose. Then he began to think of his walk, and he threw off care and looked forward to the meeting, almost as a lover might,—almost, not quite.

Luly was now a loving and lovely girl, and there has grown up between her and her uncle, one of those tender friendships, which sometimes do exist between the young and the old,—or older; and which make the loves of fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, the most beautiful and pure of all sentiments on this earth.

Between this father and daughter this beautiful love existed, and nothing so far, had come between them to separate or distract them. It is true that the feeling of Mrs. Percival was not in harmony with theirs; but if anything, this tended rather to unite and strengthen

their love than the contrary. Neither of them ever spoke to the other of that miserable selfishness which, growing with what it fed on, had become a distressing jealousy, destined to become rank and dangerous; and yet both *felt* that some such sentiment existed and was full of danger.

He watched the clock from time to time as it crept slowly along, and it almost seemed as though the hands were glued to its face, they lagged so from three to four. He had hurried his business along, and at last at a quarter before the hour of starting, he began to make his preparations;—he got down his coat and brushed it, he smoothed his hat, he took a brush and improved his shoes; for Mr. Percival was a neat and particular man, and now when he was to be a kind of beau to his little girl, he took a sort of pleasure in appearing as spruce as a man of his years might. And he really did seem young. Things were going so well on the whole, and this girl, this daughter,—of his heart at least,—was such a satisfaction to him, that he began to believe that the heaviest clouds were past.

He had his coat in his hand, ready to put it on, the hands of the clock were past the quarter, when a clerk came in with a handful of letters from the mail,—

"Steamer in, sir."

It seemed necessary to examine them. It would take but a few minutes. He opened them; he ran them over, made a note on this one, another on that; one of them fixed his attention: there was a failure of a correspondent, and a heavy debtor,—something must be done at once. He sent for his confidential man,

talked with him about it for a few moments, gave some directions as to what was to be done, went into the counting-room and examined the ledgers, came back and wrote some farther directions:—and so by this time it was half-past four. His eye caught sight of the clock,—

"So late!"

He put on his coat hastily, took his cane and gloves and walked quickly out. He hastened up the street, and through the streets by the shortest cuts, for he knew Luly would be disappointed if he did not meet her, and he had never failed to do so; he hurried on at his fastest pace, confident that if she walked slowly and he fast they should meet at about Canal street, or Chatham Square at least.

The Novemberish day was settling into an inclement one, for blue-gray clouds were covering the sky, and the fair morning was ending in a dull evening. He cared not for this, thought not of it; and as he got to Chatham Square he strained his eyes to see Luly; she was not in sight. He kept up his pace, and his face was now flushed with the sharp walk:—Up the Bowery, no Luly appeared; at the corner of Grand street he stopped and turned and looked up and down,—could she have missed him on the other side of the street? He waited and looked; no, there was no sign of her. Now he went on through Grand street, watching both sides carefully; she did not appear; he reached the corner of Broadway. "Strange," he thought—"well, she may have gone back, she has given me up." So he went on homeward, with however a less elastic step,

and with a sense of disappointment at his heart. He felt sorry too for Luly, for he knew she would have been disappointed, and she could not bear it so well as he;—he was very sorry about her.

She would see and meet him at the door; but no, he had to take out his key and open it. No sounds of her there,—there was a sinking at his heart:—where then was she? He listened a moment and then he called,

"Luly—Luly!" and his voice sounded up the stairs and through the house. But no Luly answered. His wife appeared at the banister,—

"Why, Edward, what is the matter that you make such a noise in the house? Luly has gone down to meet you, as she said you told her to;—she would wear that new shawl though I advised her not to; but she persisted, for she said *you* wanted her to wear it,—so I could not refuse."

"Well,—well,—but where is she now?" He spoke with impatience, and some irritation, at all this about the shawl.

"Why, Edward, how should I know? *I* have sent her nowhere, and she did not come to me for directions. How should *I* know?"

Her husband waited to hear no more, but went quickly out and walked quickly away over the same ground he had come,—looking, looking everywhere. But nowhere did he find the darling girl he sought. He went down into the Bowery again,—then he called a carriage and drove back rapidly to his house. It was now dark. He was trembling with a vague ter-

ror;—he could not open the door and rang the bell violently,—

"Where's Miss Lucy?" he asked of the man.

"Why, why,—my Lord,—I think she has not come in, sir."

"Luly—Luly!" again shouted Mr. Percival. He was pale with excitement. Mrs. Percival came to the stairway,—came down to him;—

"Why, Mr. Percival, she has not come in yet; do not make such a confusion I beg,"—

He looked at her sternly,—for he was nigh distract,—

"*Woman!*," he said, "*where is the child!*" Did he suspect her? Impossible! And yet he here accused her by voice and look and manner of a fearful thing, and accused her in the presence of another, a servant who would and must spread it before the world.

Did she cry out or faint or sob? No—she was of other stuff. She hardened; the sweet juices of her nature,—whatever these may have been,—turned to bitterness; she became pale and rigid, she was like stone—*she hated him.*

"Mr. Percival,"—she spoke slowly,—"you forget yourself, and you forget me. *I am your wife!*" That was all. He did not hear or heed her, but turning to the man said to him,—

"Call a policeman!"

"Hinstantly," said Mr. Tobbots.

Edward Percival staggered into his parlor, full of rosewood and damask and gilding, and fell upon a sofa, a nerveless, wretched man. The curse was pursuing him.

XXVI.

LET ME OUT!

WHERE was Luly? Let us not be kept in suspense, for that excites pain.

At a little before the hour, she had started on her walk, having an errand to do in Grand street, but sure of being in ample time to meet her uncle and friend. These times were to her the pleasantest in life; for in the streets there was much to see and talk about, and they were there secure from interruption. For somehow, both of them had come to feel, that in the house they were not at their ease, not wholly free. And yet Mrs. Percival's jealousy, if wholly alive, was not openly pronounced;—they felt it, that was all.

She walked briskly down Broadway, and along the eastern side that she might not be hindered. She walked quickly and easily, for she was now a fine graceful girl, almost as large as a woman; and her graceful motions were to herself an involuntary pleasure. She saw no one in particular, nor did she wish to, for she knew that might stop or delay her. She saw no one; and yet one saw her, who was watching for her. It was a man; the same who had first seen her in the morning and had followed her; and yet he was not the same, not in appearance. Then, he had been a country-dressed man.

Now, he was a city-dressed man, but in rough clothes. He might have been a cartman or a car-driver or any one of the thousand trades which manage to live and to live hardly in a great city.

Of course we know this was Mr. Tom Eustis from Milford. What object had he in following her? What could he do to harm her in the open day in a great city like this? And would he harm her? He followed her at a little distance, and never took his eyes from her;—he watched as a cat might a mouse, lest it should dart from him into some hole. He followed her down Broadway and hastened as she turned the corner of Grand street, and saw her there, and still followed her. She entered a shop to do her errand. There was a carriage near him; it stopped; he had a few words with the driver; and when Luly came out and walked on quickly along Grand street, this man entered the carriage and waiting a few moments went on very slowly ;—then he gave the driver a word, when he gave his horses the lash and dashed up along the side-walk, where Luly was walking alone and unattended.

The man got out, touched his hat,—"Miss Percival, I believe?"

"Yes,"—said Luly in amazement.

"Your father has sent me for you,—"

"Father?—my uncle you mean:—where is he?" She was somewhat alarmed at so unusual a thing.

"Your uncle, I mean,—yes, Miss. He sent me for you because he was hurt."

"Hurt! hurt! Where is he? tell me! let us go!—Where is my aunty? Oh go for her!"

"I have been, Miss, but she was not at home, and the man said you had come down this way to meet him;—and so I hurried down to tell you,—"

"Oh, let us go!" exclaimed Luly wholly unsuspicious, wholly engrossed in sympathy for her dear uncle. She sprang into the carriage impatient to get to him. The man was about to shut the door and mount the box,—

"No, no, no," she exclaimed,—"come here; I must know all about it,—come in here."

The man got in, with some apparent unwillingness.

"What is it? Tell me where he is and what is the matter?"

"You see, Miss, I am the porter at the store:—and to-day it so happened that Mr. Percival had to go over to the Navy Yard, and then when he was coming back, nobody knows how, his foot was caught by the boat and was crushed,—"

"Oh!" She covered her face to keep out the horrid sight, but she did not faint. "Tell the man to drive faster;—where is he, where?"

"He is down there, in a house by the ferry, Miss; the man knows."

They rattled along and made their way to the dismal quarter which now surrounds the "Hook," or elbow of the island. Luly knew nothing about it, knew not one street from another, suspected nothing, and when the carriage door opened was glad to spring out, run up the steps, and rush into the house.

It was the same house which Eustis had visited that day.

The door of the house closed upon her, and Eustis, the sham porter, did not follow her. He entered the carriage and drove rapidly away. An over-dressed, bland woman received Luly in the entry, and told her to be calm and to come with her. She was taken up to a third-story room, furnished with a bed, but rather poorly.

"You stay here a few minutes, dear, while I see him and tell him you've come."

Luly still suspected nothing. She could not sit down, so she went to the window and looked through the dirty panes into the dirty street. Every minute seemed an hour to her. Why did not the woman come back? She did not come,—Luly waited. Why did she not come? Was her dear, dear uncle dead? Oh, what should she do? She could bear it no longer. She rushed to the door, it did not open; she pulled violently, but it would not open,—*it was locked.*

Then a terrible fear shot through her veins; for what did it, what could it mean? She knocked violently upon the door, she shook it, she cried out:—

"Let me out! Let me out! Oh, uncle! uncle! I am here,—Luly! Tell them to let me out!"

There was no reply. She became frantic in her fear and rushed to the windows. They were fastened;—she could not move them. She screamed again—

"Help! help! help! Let me out, let me out!"

But there was no help. It was not a place where policemen love to abound, and beside they are too much used to such cries, in this part of the great city, to pay much heed. No policeman would be likely to

break open a house at such a feeble cry as Luly made. She sank down into the middle of the room, exhausted with agony and fear.

The shadow of night closed her in as she still lay there, half alive, half dead.

XXVII.

THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.

By and by the door opened, and a woman looked in—

"She's got quiet at last."

She entered; it was the same over-dressed, bland woman who had shown her to the room. A coarse and dirty servant girl brought a candle and some food and a tray:—

"Come, my dear, rouse up,—don't give way to your feelings so. Its bad, makes one's eyes weak and spoils one's pretty looks. Come, rouse up, and eat something; —here, my dear."

She took hold of Luly to raise her, when the girl shrank from her as if she were a toad.

Luly looked with terrified eyes:—"Where is he? where is my uncle?" She clasped her hands in supplication.

"O, he's doing very well, my child; but he don't want to see you yet. You must wait he says 'till he's better—I'll take good care of you, never mind. He'll be well enough in a day or two."

What did it mean? Some dreadful thing it must mean; but Luly's girl's mind did not know what, could not dream what. She could not know what horrid

things women do to women in this world;—how cruel they are to one another; how hardened they may come to be, how vile.

"He'll do nicely, never fear; and to-morrow the gentleman will be here as likely as not, and he'll tell you all about it. Now, my dear, get up and eat something and you'll be better."

Luly still lay in a heap upon the floor. Why should she get up? what was she to do?

"Where is he?"

"Oh, he's in his room, he's doing very well"—

"May I go to him?"

"Not till he sends for you, my dear; you'd wait for him to send I'm sure?"

"I may go home?"—Luly asked.

"Not to-night in the dark, my dear. He would not like that"—

"But my Aunty?"

"O, she'll be here to-morrow I dare say. It'll be all right."

Luly darted from her toward the door, but the woman was too quick, and grasped her arm firmly.

"Why, my dear, you mustn't go to doing that sort of thing;—that is not lady-like, that isn't."

Luly looked up in her face piteously:—

"Have you got a daughter, a girl, a girl who loves you?"

The woman laughed out derisively,—

"Maybe I have, maybe I haven't; you are a good pretty girl, and all you have to do is to mind me and then it'll be all right:—that's the way my girls all do.

So now I'll bid you good night, and in the morning you'll be good and pleasant, I'm sure."

Ah me! Luly had fallen into the toils of one of those dreadful women who make a traffic of youth and virtue, who live by others' death, who poison the lives of all they breathe upon, who know nor care for home nor friend, whose instincts are all for greed, who pander to the worst vices of men. How can she escape? Why is she here? Has Tom Eustis led her here to feast upon her like the spider on the fly? She is too young, too pure, too beautiful, too loving and too lovely, for such a living death. Must that fair young face become brazen with vice, that fair young soul grow black with slime, those clear young eyes grow jaundiced with hatreds? No—no—no! Forbid it all ye angels of Heaven! Never, never!

And yet—and yet,—thousands on thousands of such young creatures are led and thrust down in every great city to the blackness of the pit. The great city is the fester of civilization, and Christianity itself cannot save it.

Eustis saw the woman the next evening.

We shall learn perhaps what his purpose is.

"Well, how is she, eh?"

"O nicely, Mr. Robinson; she'll do well enough in a week or two; they always kick-up at first. You see every kind of creature has to be broke,—a woman just as much as any; that's how it is."

"Well, see to her now, and don't let her get away, at

any rate not yet awhile. By and by it may be all well enough to let him have her. Damn him! He served me a trick once, and I've sworn to pay him off."

"That's it, Mr. Robinson. Never be in debt, pay as you go, pay as you go; that's my doctrine." She laughed her loud and hollow laugh, and winked knowingly.

"Want to see her, Mr. Robinson?"

"No, no!—you must see to her; I don't want to be mixed up in it. And you must not let on that I've had anything to do with it any way, do you hear?"

She gave him a look. "Trust me, my dear, nobody knows what Aunt Christian's about. She keeps her own counsel, she does. Trust her. She knows the world, and she works for her customers. Trust her, Mr. Robinson." She laughed and winked her cruel, knowing, business wink. It meant too much.

"Where is she?" asked Eustis.

"Up there,"— pointing with her thumb.

"Alone?"

"Yes;"— she nodded and winked.

"It won't do to let her stay alone too long."

"O no, I understand,"—she gave her significant nod and wink, as she talked, to emphasize all she said.

"You see, Chris, she's not one of the sort you commonly have; she's fine I tell you, and needs a finer hand than you use. Don't break her down too sudden,—she won't stand that; work it gently, and safely, and don't let her die on your hands. I want to send her back to him by and by. You understand? He served me a trick once;—eh—you understand?"

She understood it perfectly;—she was as shrewd an old villain as any man of them all; and a great deal shrewder and harder than Tom Eustis was or was ever to be. He had a special purpose now to accomplish; the ruin and wreck of that girl, would be the ruin and wreck of that man who had brought ruin and wretchedness to him and his. He had sworn to himself to work it.

He gave her money, for that was what she wanted and worked for; and left her,—left his own sister's dear child in her cruel hands.

XXVIII.

THE JUKE MAKES LOVE.

Oh, how heavily the days and hours and minutes passed to the wretched girl! She would not leave her room, she dared not; and she did not, could not die. But she suffered all that the soul of a young girl could suffer in that cruel week. She was a prisoner in the house of the Lepers, and she could not but know it. *Why* she was there she dared not ask even her own soul; and yet she was old enough now to fear, and to fear untold horrors, in the vagueness of all that surrounded her. The midnight orgies which came creeping through her floor and door told her something, and her fears pictured the rest.

What was to come to her and when? She almost wished it might come at once and be the sooner over. But she had no knife, nor pistol, and how was she to defend herself if any evil came nigh her? She watered her bed with tears, and she prayed with heart and voice, such words as must have reached the "Mercy-seat," though human ears were deaf.

She grew pale and weak; her eyes were deep in her head; her hair, luxuriant and lovely as it was, was now a wild and tangled mass:—she knew nor cared more for

beauty or dress or happiness; she only prayed that she might once more get to see her uncle before she died, and receive from him one last kiss of tenderness and love. She so longed to tell him that she had not deserted him, had not been ungrateful and bad, had not forgotten one word or one act of the thousand and thousands he had blessed her with; she longed to tell him she was still a loving, grateful girl, willing to die if he only might but know it. Such generous thoughts thronged her now bursting heart as she lay on her wretched bed. There was no escape—none? She grew weak and weaker, she ate less and less; she thought she must die, and dreadful as the thought is to one so young, she felt that she would die willingly if she might but put her arms around her uncle's neck and give him one parting kiss.

She is not to die so.

She lay on her bed or on the floor, almost senseless to all sounds of the external world, and in that very stupor finding a kind of safety;—but for it she must have gone mad. She lay on the floor, when the sounds of a street organ brought the ragged and dirty children together, who always throng these streets. They danced and capered and shouted, and the monkey jingled his drum and grinned and picked up his pennies; for none are so poor in their slums that they cannot pay for this breath of melody, and this grotesque aping of human nature. The sounds reached her dulled ears, and slowly awakened some consciousness. Then the artist struck up an air,

"The Campbells are coming."

She raised her head, she listened, she sat up;—

"Yes, yes, yes!"

She started to her feet, all languor, all weakness gone; she rushed to the window,—"Yes,—yes!—it is, it is Juke and the monkey, and the dog,—Brit!"

For a moment her eyes swam and her brain whirled; she seized the window to hold herself up. Then her consciousness came back,—what could she do? She tried the windows, she shouted, but it was all useless;—nothing could be heard. She was in despair. Here was deliverance, but she could not seize it.—God of mercy, help her!

Was it an inspiration? She saw a small break in the pane of dirty glass. It was but an instant for her to tear a bit of paper from a note in her pocket, to write her name on it, and push it through the crack:—it went whirling and zig-zagging down the air, and fell upon the top of the organ under the very nose of the Juke. He saw it and took it in his hand, but he could not read it. He looked up but saw no one, and he could not hear the cry of the girl so far above him. He held the bit of paper fast in his hand while he played out his tunes. Then he slung his organ on his shoulder, and with Jerryco on the top of it, and Brit at his heels, went trudging away.

"Oh God! he is gone, he is gone!" cried Luly, as she sank back into her despair.

But Juke held the paper in his hand, and his Italian mind wondered what it meant;—something he was sure.—Pieces of paper do not come down out of heaven for nothing, that was certain. How was he to discover

what the paper meant, if anything? His Italian mind again stood him in stead. Policemen can sometimes read writing, now why not ask one of them? The Juke did not like policemen, for they did not like such as he; but why not use one now? He decided that he would ask one what was writ on the paper:—

"Well, what is it, yer honor?" he held his hat in his hand with all deference.

The policeman was puzzled, but he spelled out—"L-u-l-y h-e-l-p."

"An' that's the whole of it, yer honor?"

"That's all,—"

"Blessings be on yer head, and on yer posterity;—an' good day to ye!"

Why does not he take the policeman and go to the house, and find Luly, and take her away, and have done with it?

Ah, my friend, you do not understand these Milesian Jukes. He would no more think of going with a policeman, than he would fly up to the window to do it.

No, he waited about until the evening set in. Then he wandered around again to the house in Cannon street. He waited and watched quietly; he saw the house gradually lighted up, room after room.

The Juke looked all over the house, and watched each lighted window, listened to each sound, scanned each passer by. He saw that the windows of one upper chamber were lighted last, and that these windows ran up into the roof, in a way they did it in those old-fashioned days, when the Rutgers and the Willets built houses and lived over in that eastern part of the city.

Those upper windows remained dark until past eight o'clock; then he saw signs of life, a candle was moving about, and shadows were seen on the windows, and once a figure came to the window and seemed to look into the darkness. Was it Luly? He could not tell; but he said to himself,—

"That's the darlin' sure, and what may she be doing in that house?"

What was the Juke going to do? He hardly knew, but his Italian mind, as I have said, was engaged to unravel the mystery at some rate. He waited on and watched; he saw one come and enter the house, and another, and another. He saw the rooms grow brighter, and he heard sounds of laughter and song coming from them;—and if he could have heard the words, he would have found they were not such words as he and Luly used to sing, years ago, when they plied their trade together in the streets of the city; quite other than those. But the mirth grew, and there were sounds of, what is called in some districts, "a high old time." He thought he would like to join the chorus; he could sing,—why not? But his mind saw that he might best approach the mistress through the maid. He went under the steps to a lower door. A sort of recessed place led into a sort of coal hole under the pavement; here he placed Brit, and shook a warning finger at him; then he knocked at the door,—no answer; again, again:—

"What the divil's come to ye?"—cried a voice within, and a shrill, harsh voice it was—"that ye are bangin' the door down that way, wid yer nasty clams come sellin' round this time o' night?—off wid ye, off wid ye!"

It was quite natural that he should have got this reply; for nearly all the visitors that came to Bridget's door were those itinerant merchants who sell that succulent fish, known as "clam." It was quite natural, therefore, that she should warn him off thus without ceremony. But Juke was not to be put off so.

"But, Nancy darlin', it's me,—the Artist not the Merchant at all.—"

"And who the divil are *you* that ye be comin' this time o' night? Get away wid ye!"—Reflectively,—"Artiss! what the divil is a Artiss? Anyway, go long wid ye!"

"An Artist is a sweetheart, and I'm yours, so let me in, an' be a darlin' as ye are,—and I'll play ye a tchune,—"

"Heh? a tchune? and have ye a music wid ye?" She came now to the door to reconnoitre.

"Who ar' ye anyway?"

"I'm yer sweetheart wid the music to make yer wheels go aisey;—better than the best candle-grase any day of the year, thanks be to the blessed Virgin herself, it is"—crossing himself devoutly, and taking off his high-crowned hat and bowing low, as she opened the door to him. Such blandishments she could not resist, what lone woman could?

The Juke had now dropped his Italian tongue and spoke out in a rich, broad, Milesian brogue, which rang in Bridget's heart. No man can write it, with all its full, round, oily, juicy, delicious flavors; but those who have heard it, they know what a thing it is, they remember it.

Bridget was not young, she was not handsome, she was not clean, nor was she angelic according to the received ideas; but then Juke made her feel that she was all these;—and that's the way, I take it, to get on the right side of a woman; or a man either, for that matter.

He got on the right side of her at any rate, and found a warm and pleasant seat by her small fire. A fire-place without a woman by it, is a poor place, and a fire-place with a man sitting in it seemed to Bridget much more complete; and it was. The Juke seemed to fill up a hole or space there was in the room; it was no longer empty and void. A man is better than nothing to look at, and if he can talk—why, better yet. It is even better to fight now and then, than to have no man round at all. These profound moral reflections did not pass through Bridget's virgin mind; they are such as I think she would have had, had she ever reached the sphere of connubial bliss. No, I am obliged to say,—she was lost in admiration of Juke's velvet jacket, and thought how soft and warm such a long black beard must be. Altogether, the Juke was not a man to be driven away with vile words,—not when he meant to stay at any cost, as he now did.

"And what made ye call me 'Nancy' when my name's Bridget, ye ignarent paddy, eh?"

"An' don't ye know that now? don't ye know now what Nancy means anyway?"

"What does it mean then? Out wid it!"

"'Nancy,' darlin', means 'lovely'—that's what it manes—the poits always write 'Nancy' when they make

love in their verses, do ye mind that? I know a power of verses with 'Nancy' in them, and that's where it is, do you see?"

"If ye know so many verses now, wid love in 'em, why don't ye sing one, and not make such a blather about it,—eh?"

So then Juke sang out that most romantic and pathetic ballad, which begins,

> "Lord Lovel he stood at his Castle gate,
> A combing his milk-white steed"—

which every one knows has 'Nancy' in it thirteen times: it is indeed an affecting song and Bridget felt it so. But Juke had not got to the most affecting climax when a voice sounded down the kitchen stairs,—and sharply too, and sharp voices do jar upon sweet music,—

"What you got down there, Bridget—eh? a man, eh?"

"Tell her, it's yer cousin come from Ittely to sing ye a tchune,—tell her that," whispered Juke.

"Only my cousin, Mom, come from Ittely, a singin' me a little tchune."

"Cousin! drat the girl! If I'd had my way making this world I'd never had a cousin in it, not one. What's he doing there?"

"Nothing, Mom, but singin' me a tchune."

"Have him up, have him up," said one of the men; "if he can sing. Let's see what the critter's got inside him."

"Man, come up here," shouted the lady of the house.

Juke winked at Bridget and gave her a smack as he prepared to go up.

"What's that noise?" asked the mistress.

"Only one of them bad eggs bustin'," replied the maid.

"Bad eggs!—I'll bad eggs you!"

The Juke appeared at the head of the stairs with his organ and his monkey.

"Long life to ye, as the finest lady I've seen this many a day,—not twenty of the likes of ye in my blessed Ittely where the holy Virgin was born and has her house to this day, which these eyes have seen a hangin' in the air, an' not a bit of rope or cord to hould it up if ye'll believe the mericle,—an' not one of yer beautiful faces have I seen in Americy if I lave out yer own purty face, which is as like the blessed Virgin as paint and canviss can make it. And now if ye'd like a little of the fine music for yer consolashun, I'm the man to be afther givin' it to ye the day, and may the blessings of the holy Virgin be on yer head."

"What you got there, paddy?" asked one of the men insolently;—"Is it your baby?"

Then the girls broke out into a loud laugh.

"A babby it is indeed, and a purtier babby than 'll ever call you father, that's what it is:—Show 'em what ye can do, Jerryco."

The monkey jumped from the Juke's shoulder into the middle of the table, overturning bottles and glasses, and causing the girls to scream with real or feigned fright. There he began to dance, and to swing a bottle around his head, while the Juke played his organ. He gave him a sign and he turned summersets and stood on his head. He marched like a soldier and fired a gun

at one of the girls, whereat there was more screaming and laughing.

If there be any enjoyment in the kind of life these poor creatures lead, it finds expression in loud and violent laughter and shouts. *Noise* is the essence of life.

The Juke humored them, for he had a purpose in doing it; he played for them, sang for them, and made Jerryco do all his tricks in his most perfect manner.

"And where do you come from?" asked one. "From Italy did you say?"

"From the land of music sure—such music as I make comes from the blessed Virgin herself, and is such as the angils sing,—any boddy knows that."

"And the 'Babby'—is he one of the Virgin's babbies?" asked one,—and here he went too far, though all laughed out.

The Juke turned to the mistress of the house appealingly:—"Will yer noble lady protect the poor wanderer who leaves his own happy counthry to come to ye and make music for ye, and to sing for ye, and lay his poor body down for ye to step on? The like o' you, my lady, knows how to be kind and to speak a civil word in the ear of the poor melankally boy who has never a friend in the wide world, except the poor bit of beast,—come here Jerryco,"—the monkey jumped on his shoulder and rubbed his cheek against the Juke's affectionately,—"and the blessed Virgin herself,"—crossing himself devoutly,—"who always knows how to bless and care for the poor and the wretched, and never lets those who love her insult anybody, and never orders any to go to heaven, but helps them surely

there, my lady, I'll live to see your blessed face one day, —that I'm sure of,"—he now recovered his spirits,— "and may God keep ye, lady, and all the blessed saints go troopin' round wid ye when ye come to glory, and now good-night, lady;"—he brushed away a seeming tear or two;—"ye've been kind to the poor wanderer and he'll never forget it, but put up a prayer to the holy Virgin whenever he kneels before the altar on the beautiful Easter;—and now, my lady, good-night, ye'll not forget the poor fellow who has no home nor friend;"—

"Here, my man," cried the fellow who had made the bitter jibe,—"take this," tossing him a dollar, "and shut up your gab, and give us some more of your music."

But the Juke paid him no heed;—he wished to move the woman in his favor;—so he looked at her beseechingly with hat in hand, organ on shoulder, and monkey on organ,—

"Well, well," she said, "go down and tell Bridget to give you something to eat and drink and don't mind what the man says, nobody cares what he says;—go down and make yourself comfortable."

"Give us some music before you go,"—they cried.— The woman nodded that he should do so. The Juke unslung his organ and again they went at it.

The woman disappeared,—for what? She happened to remember that there was a poor lonely obdurate girl high up in the house who resisted all her blandishments, all her arts. Perhaps this music and the curious little monkey would tempt her out. She hastened up upon

this errand, unlocked the door, and told Luly what she wanted. Luly was awake, alert; she too had heard the music, her heart bounded; for she fancied that if Juke was nigh, help was nigh. But she too was now to be cunning,—to meet art with art. She pretended to be asleep or indifferent or stupid;—the woman urged and set forth the attractions of the wonderful monkey and the charming music. Finally Luly suffered herself to be persuaded or led.

"Here, I must fix you up a little," said the harridan; "twon't do to go down so, and you such a pretty girl. There ain't a prettier girl than you, that I'll say. With such a figure I would have made my fortune, and so will you. Come, my dear."

Luly followed passively, and found herself in a smoky room in the midst of some eight or ten men and women, a thousand times more repulsive than any she had seen at Misthress Mulloy's; for they, if rough, were decent,—these were rough and in-decent. But Luly swallowed her disgust, and indeed she was half stupefied by suffering and confinement.

"What you got there, Chris?" asked one of the men; but Mistress Christian held up a warning finger.

Luly saw the Juke and she saw Jerryco, and her heart took courage; but the Juke said nothing; he made no sign but went on playing and the monkey went on posturing, and the men drank and clinked glasses, and the women laughed boisterously,—until Luly was half-dazed. She did not dare to make a motion, and yet she longed to rush into Juke's arms;—he made no sign of recognition, but played on until all were tired.

he repeated his thanks and his blarney, and made a tearful face at the woman, who commended him to the care of Bridget. The harridan followed him, holding Luly's hand, to the stairway, and then the Juke said:—

"If I had the slip of girl to play the tamborine and dance a bit, it would be a fortune to me, and to you too, my lady,—I could give you half, eh?"

"Ah, we couldn't spare our dear little girl, could we, Luly?—O no,—we love one another too much, don't we, Luly?—O no, we'll never part, will we, Luly?"—to all which Luly said nothing, but watched Juke. At a moment when the woman turned her head he put his hand on his mouth and pointed upward;—what it meant she knew not, but took courage.

Now Juke had a task below;—his night's labors were not done. He meant to stay in the house, and he meant to do more than that. He flattered and praised Bridget all she could possibly bear;—he was charming to her hungry soul, for she too longed for love. He said and did his possible, he stuck at nothing. She fed him and petted him and finally made him a rough bed on the floor; and at last, after midnight, the house was still.

But he had commiserated her hard life, and her over-work, and so had discovered that the "little fool" up in the *attic* was more trouble than all the rest.

"Mighty bad, Bridget, but never give it up;—we'll get to heaven one day, and then you and I, dear, will get our share, eh?—That's a blessed thing to know anyway; an' then we'll see *them* a burnin' and a

fryin' down below, and divil a drop of water we'll give 'em anyway, eh—Bridget?" He put his fingers into her side and gave her a kiss as she went off to bed.

XXIX.

AN ESCAPE.

All was at last still.

But there was one who slept not,—yes two who slept not; and perhaps a third. For how can such a woman as Mistress Christian sleep the sound sleep of peace? Perhaps she did.

The Juke lay down and covered himself with the rough quilt, and snored if he heard any sound. But his ears were open, and his senses all awake. How was he to find Luly's room, how get her out of it if he did find it?—and how was he to get her out of the house if all elsewere done? Not an easy task he had set himself;—he did not dream of defeat. By and by he struck a light and set about his work. The monkey began to grin and chatter, but Juke wrapped him in his coat and laid him on the organ, so that he should see and know nothing. He possessed himself of a strong carving-knife, and he found a gimblet;—there semed to be no other tools that he could make available. Then he went to the stairs and listened;—there was no sound. He crept through the thick darkness to the top,—no sound. He felt his way along the banister and listened, and then crept along the next flight of

stairs;—through the crack of the door he saw a light was burning and somebody was awake. He crept down again and waited. It was weary work. He waited, and then again he crept up the stairs; they did not creak, that was most lucky. He felt his way to the next stairs, up them he crept,—that was easy enough. But now, how was he to find his way to that attic? and to Luly's room? It was difficult, but not impossible. He lay on the floor a few minutes, and then rubbed a match on his shoe,—*that* waked no one; then he saw an open door and a stairway, and up it he went. So, he is near the spot. But the door, which door,—if more than one? He trusted his genius, and tried with all his might to remember how the room was situated whose windows had been dark. He crept along the rough floor, he came to a door, he felt of it carefully,—he crept along and came to another;—two, which one? He must choose, he gave a slight tap, he heard some one turn in a creaking bed and he heard a grunt;—that was not Luly; but was it any one awake? He waited now, in silence;—then he heard a small whisper.

"Juke, Juke, Juke."

Ah, it was the other door,—yes, yes. He crept back and tapped on it,—

"Yes, Juke,—"

"Can you open the door, Luly?" he whispered below his breath through the key-hole.

"No, Juke."

"God-a-mercy, that the blessed Virgin had only made me a picklock and a thaif and a robber!" was his mental exclamation.

What *could* he do? He was puzzled. He felt of the key-hole and of the door. It would never do to burst it in,—that would rouse the whole house. He was perplexed, but he had the knife and gimlet in his hand. He again felt over the door in the darkness and found that at the lower part was one, a single panel; not two, as is so common. Now if he *could* cut that out, perhaps Luly might creep through. He plied his gimlet across the whole top and the whole bottom of the panel;—that made no noise and helped on the work. He tried the knife, it was too dull.

"Oh that the blessed Virgin had only made me a thaif and a robber that I might know how to break in the door this night!" was again his prayer.

He was about at his wit's end, when he felt his own knife in his pocket. He seized it, he cut away from gimlet-hole to gimlet-hole across the panel, and again across it. Now then to go down it; he tried to split it, that made a noise. No, he must cut away. He did cut away, sliver after sliver until he felt it loosening; then he whispered through to Luly, to press it toward him. She pushed with her light weight, it yielded and fell into his hand.

"Now darlin', can ye crawl through?"

She tried, but stuck fast.

"Take off yer clothes," whispered the Juke,—"off wid 'em quick."

It was a moment's work. She tried it, she came through.

The Juke crossed himself and said a good word—such as he had heard in his church.

"Now, Luly, creep on cat's toes after me."

She held her clothes in her hand and crept noiselessly down the stairs, and through the entry and down the next flight, and now they were getting upon dangerous ground. Juke clasped Luly's hand tighter and went on; but it always happens so, that a shoe falls at the most dangerous point, because we try so hard. A shoe did fall and Juke's breath stopped, but he hastened on and down the last stairs he got. The old woman heard the sound of course, and got up and struck a light, and put her ugly old head out her door, and said,—"Drat that girl! she's not gone to bed yet;—fooling with that organ-man down there to this time of night! I'll give her the soft side of my tongue in the morning." So she grumbled to herself, but she *did not see the little shoe*, and she heard nothing strange, and back she went to bed.

Juke and Luly waited and waited below; and Luly was shivering with cold. The girl was nearly naked. Juke took her clothes and put them on and tried to be a dressing-maid, but a rude one enough he was.

They waited a little longer, until Juke thought it must be near morning. He grew impatient. Now he grasped Luly's hand and they crept along to the front door. It was locked, he tried to open it, it remained fast;—he tried again and again, but the locks did not yield to his touch. Again he prayed,—

"Oh that the blessed Virgin had only made me a picklock and a thaif this night that I might get out of this house."

The game seemed up.—He heard a sound of some

one moving in the house. He slipped in with Luly to the open door of the parlor;—was there a possible escape that way? A door was opened and a footstep came along the entry and down the stairs; the old woman's door opened, he heard her say

"Good-bye,"—

The man came carefully down the stairs, and went to the door; he understood the latches, they yielded to *his* touch, the door opened. Juke had Luly's hand in his, he dragged her forward, sprang to the door, grasped it before it was shut, knocked the man over, and, dragging Luly after him, ran up the street.

They were free!—and a loud joyous bark from Brit as he rushed around them, welcomed them into the street.

XXX.

MATILDA, I WAS MAD!

Hope and trust existed no longer; no longer was there a vestige of happiness in that great house. Luly, the child of the house, the sunshine of it, the life of it, had disappeared, and the most diligent search had failed to discover her.

Mr. Percival was thunderstruck; the curse pursued him and he knew it. He was a prey to his own remorse, and to terrible fears for Luly, who had become dearer to him than himself, dearer than all else. Was she alive? Was she dead? He could not believe her to be dead, but perhaps better dead than worse. What might she not be suffering?—what evil might not threaten her? Among what wretches might she not now be living or —dying? He spent his days and his nights in seeking, watching, walking the streets, in a kind of moanless despair. He quickened the actions of the police by the promise of extravagant rewards, and they were on the alert,—in time would have discovered all; but it seemed to him that they did nothing, cared nothing:—why was not the whole police of the city set to work to search every house in it? That was the feeling of impatience he endured. *They* felt none of his impatience or anxi-

ety, for they were used to such things; it seemed to them not so terrible a thing; they were sure to unravel it, if they could have a little time; but he could not bear the cool, imperturbable way they went about their work.

So the week dragged on, and no news came of the girl,—nothing upon which Mr. Percival could fasten a hope.

Mrs. Percival was also a victim to her own miseries. She had a feeling of sincere pity that Luly should be thus ravished away from before their eyes; and she shed a few tears over the child she had so long cared for and watched. But her own woes were too great, they engrossed her soul. She had failed to excite and secure the profound, the slavish love of Edward Percival, and without that she had failed in all. She had watched, had been patient, and careful, and anxious to secure it; and yet had seen him lavish upon this stray child a wealth of love, which she fancied would have satisfied her soul. But it would not,—we can know that; for selfishness grows with what it feeds on, until it becomes an all-devouring monster,—cruel and insatiable. This woman, with nothing to love and care for but herself and her husband, had allowed her uncultivated nature to grow up with rank weeds and thorny briers, which now lacerated her on every hand. So it always is, so it must be to such unfortunates. Her house, nor her dress, nor her carriage, nor her money were of any avail; they did not heal or allay the wounds. And now a new misery had come into her life;—she had been insulted, accused by the only man whom she had tried to win,

and accused publicly, of a crime against which her woman's nature cried out. To harm Luly was not in her heart, only to help herself;—and she did not know that the only way to help one's self is to help others. She did not *feel* that and so *know it;* for words cannot make a divine truth vital and alive in the soul.

What was she to do? She was now divided, distracted, between two opposing passions—love for Edward Percival or a desire for his love, and hatred of the man who had reje ctedher and despised her, and at last had accused her before a servant, of a mean and disgraceful act. Her first impulse was to leave the house, to abandon all, to assert herself and leave him alone to his own bitter punishment. But where should she go, and how should she live? These thoughts came to her. She had no father's or mother's house to fly to, to find shelter in; and if she went out alone and vaguely, she would publish her own failure and disgrace to the world. It was impossible. She must live on and endure if she could not hope; if she could not break him, she must herself bend.

But now, if Luly was indeed lost to her, *to him!*—the thought possessed her,—might she not hope? The girl absent, he would turn to her; again would need and value her love and tenderness; again would seek and desire her; and she might yet be what she once had hoped to be, the *only* being he should love on earth.

Much as she loved Luly, much as she had done for her, and proud as she had begun to be of her, as she grew up and developed more and more into grace and loveliness, she now admitted into her soul a sort of greedy

spirit which whispered,—"tgat if Luly did not come back her triumph would be easier and surer." But no, no!—She drove it out, banished it, still it came back and whispered in her ear again and ahain.

And these words rankled in her memory,—"Woman —where is the child?" and the tone and the manner said that he accused her; she must put herself right,—she must!

Mr. Percival dragged himself home after another fruitless day's search, dragged himself up his steps, and into his library—and fell upon his sofa. Should he too curse God and die, as Job had been tempted to do so many centuries ago? That his own punishment was just, he could not gainsay;—but the child, the child! The dear girl he had come to love as his own child, why must she too suffer?—Let it come to him if it must, but spare her, spare her! Such was his prayer, as his wife came and stood before him. He lay still, for what could he now say or do?

"Mr. Percival," she said gravely, and still standing, —"a great grief and sorrow has come to this house, one which has overwhelmed me:—that after all my years of care and anxiety the dear girl should have been violently torn from us, has made me doubt the wisdom of Providence; what it means I cannot understand. In the violence of your own grief, Mr. Percival, you seem totally to forget mine, you seem to forget that I, who have been a mother to her, am more keenly touched at this great misfortune than any one else"—

"No—no,—I do not forget,—pardon,—" he said, attempting to interrupt her, but she went on;—

"But more than all, I have been wounded deeply, deeply;—and I cannot, cannot forget it;—you have accused me, Edward Percival, of a black crime,"—

He made a gesture and sat up erect.

"You have charged upon me, that *I* knew what had become of the child, that *I* had been privy to this thing; perhaps that *I* had instigated it:—for I know not what black thoughts may have entered your mind;—that *I* had plotted harm to the child whom I had loved as my own, to the child that I had brought into this house, that it might be a joy and a comfort to *you* as well as to myself:—and you have said such words to me, your wife; and not only so have said them in the presence of another, and that man a hireling whose allegiance you can buy with your money, who cares only for you, who may defame me through this town, who may say words which will surely bring disgrace upon me, but as surely upon you, Edward Percival!—You have said and done this thing, and I now come here and, standing before you, I call God to witness that you have done me a fearful wrong, I call God to witness that I am pure from this accusation, I call him to witness;"— She broke down, overcome with the violence of her emotions. She sank before him, and covered her bowed face with her trembling hands.

He kneeled before her, conscience-stricken. He *had* done it, he had done what she had said, and he knew that he deserved her reproaches. He kneeled before her and looked at her crushed form with dry eyes;—

what could he do? He tried to take her hands, to raise her, but she refused.

"Matilda,"—he said at last,—"I was mad, I was crazed, I was cursed; I knew not what I said nor what I did. I *have* done you a fearful wrong,—have done what no man should do,—have spoken words to you that have disgraced *me*;—and now, here, on my knees, in the presence of the God you invoke, I ask you to pardon me, as I ask *Him* to pardon me."

He was generous, penitent, stricken. He longed to make an atonement, to restore to her that peace which was denied to him. He took her hands, he caressed her head. What would she do, what should she do? Would she too be generous and forgive? She was moved and melted, and tears came from her eyes:—she looked at him through these tears,—

"Oh, Edward, Edward, love me, and let me forget."—

He took her to his heart and kissed her brow. And again they two were reconciled, again their two natures touched and were one. How long will it last?

XXXI.

MISTHRESS MULLOY IS PERPLEXED.

Juke and Luly fled through the dark, cold, dirty streets. Where did they fly? Not to the fine house in Broadway, not to the protection of the police;—no, they made their way swiftly to the poor rooms of Misthress Mulloy; that was Juke's place of safety and consolation. It was not often that Luly saw these poor rooms now, and that great-hearted woman; for their lives were wide apart; separated by the impassable barrier of "Society." How could a finely dressed girl like Luly make her way to the poor quarters of Misthress Mulloy? How could she sit beside her great tub steaming with soap and foul linen, and spend her time with the hard-working woman who had plucked her from the street? Not that Luly was ungrateful or ungenerous—by no means shall we admit that; but in a great city nobody is simple and honest and true;—all is stilted, forced, artificial. And so it came about that these two, who really loved one another, were separated as much as if a sea rolled between.

They reached the narrow stairway;—Luly was exhausted. The Juke lifted her in his strong arms and carried her up to his own door; it was not locked. He

pushed it open, and entered. Misthress Mulloy was still in her bed;—

"An' what have you got there, Juke?" she asked.

"A present. Once ye brought me a little girl,—now I bring you one, bedad! Look at that!"

He laid Luly on the bed beside his wife. The Misthress looked down at her in amazement. She hardly knew the child, so thin, and wan and cold. She looked at the girl and she looked at the Juke. What did it all mean?

"Luly!"

She bent down and kissed her again and again; but Luly said nothing, she was so nigh exhausted. For a week she had been tortured, strained to the utmost; now she sank down into a torpor. She was safe, that was her only consciousness. She lay insensible, while the Misthress undressed and rubbed her and warmed her, as she had done once before, and tried to bring her to life.

"Where did you find her, Juke?" she asked in a low voice,—though Luly seemed not to hear or feel any more.

"Ye may ask that!—the blessed Virgin knows all about it; devil a bit do I, an' that's the truth."

The Misthress shook her head, as she looked at the wan girl who hardly breathed; she was perplexed and fearful; how much could such a young thing bear and live?

She shook her head.—"Juke; I'm fearin' for her, she's so white and so cold. I'm fearin' for her."

"Divil a bit o' that!" said Juke hopefully. "The blessed Virgin sent me afther her, an' that's enough.

You'd not believe *she'd* be afther desartin her now? be aisy wid ye, Misthress Mulloy! Say yer prayers and get some breakfast, for I'm hungry for it, like a hawk that's had poor huntin'. Come, Misthress, I'll make the fire, let her sleep; she'll do; the angels 'll keep her in their little hands, an' she'll hear the harps a singin'; no doubt of 't.—Come, Misthress."

They bustled about and got their breakfast, and Juke was, as he said, nigh spent. What were they next to do? Luly slept on or lay in a state of unconsciousness; neither the Misthress nor Juke dared to waken her; and yet the Juke felt sure she should have something to eat.

"It 'll niver do," he said; "she's as hungry as I am, and I tell ye she must be fed. I never knew anybody to die wid a full stomach, that I'll tell ye, Misthress Mulloy. I say, borrey the Widdy Maccracken's goat and give her some milk, that'll bring her about; borrey the goat."

Still Luly slept on.

Misthress Mulloy was perplexed. How came Luly here?

"Where did ye say ye found her, Juke?" she asked again.

"Down there," pointing over her shoulder, "where she ought never to ha' been,—at one of them houses."

"Them houses!"—the Misthress knew what that meant. But how came she there? was Luly a bad girl? Impossible. How came she there then? She was perplexed. Had Mrs. Percival, the fine lady, got tired of her and turned her out of her house? Those fine ladies do

such strange things, she feared.—But if she had turned her out, why did not Luly come to her? What did it, what could it mean? She went silently about her work all the morning, turning these things over in her mind, unable to solve the riddle. The Juke sat about in an exhausted, bewildered way; he seemed to have no plan or purpose; how was he to get back his organ and his monkey, the tools whereby he earned his bread? He gave them no thought; he too was busy and perplexed about the girl. Brit made himself at home, and quietly coiled himself under Luly's bed and slept too.

After noon Luly started from her sleep; her cheeks were flushed and her eyes bright.

The Misthress hastened to her and laid her hand upon her head,—it was very hot. The girl seemed a little bewildered, and at a loss to know where she was. She looked strangely at Misthress Mulloy for a moment and then whispered,—

"Are you a good woman?"—

"Ah, my darlin', I'm good to you anyway," smoothing her hair. "An' what made ye ask that? Were they bad to ye, eh?"

"O yes, very bad, very bad," Luly murmured.

"Never think of them again, my pet; ye're at home now, and the ould Misthress will see to ye,—she'll do that, so rest aisey."

The familiar tone aroused Luly's consciousness; she looked at her friend,—

"Ah, you are the dear old Misthress;"—she put her arms around the rough woman's neck and held her to her bosom. It was too much for both of them. Mis-

thress Mulloy could not keep back her tears as she kissed the fevered girl, and Luly was so weak that even this little excitement upset her.

"There, there!" she cried,—"I hear them coming,—shut the door, shut the door, don't let them come in!" She started up in her bed, overcome with terror. The Mistress laid her down gently with her strong arms, and whispered soothing words, and Luly yielded and fell back into unconsciousness again.

"Juke," said Misthress Mulloy, "I'm afraid she'll die."

"Niver a bit, I tell ye! An' what should she die for, now when I have got her safe? Divil a bit, I tell ye, Misthress."

"But we must see somebody, a docther will be wantin' to see her, I doubt."

"Why should he be wantin' to see her anyway? The blessed Virgin, she'll carry her through on her own blessed wings; niver a doubt on't. What for should they be wantin' to see her to pour down their nasty stuff into her purty mouth? What do ye talk that way for, Misthress Mulloy?"

"Ye must go and see the Lady Percyval anyway, Mike,"—

"How do ye know that it was not she herself who turned her out into the bitter nights to die or worse? How do you know that?"

It puzzled Misthress Mulloy to know what to do or have done; and yet something must be done.

"Any way, Mike, ye must go and look and see about it. Do that, Mike, an' God bless ye."

XXXII.

A MEAN LOOKING FELLOW.

Two men occasionally crossed one another in the street by Mr. Edward Percival's house. Both were roughly dressed and seemed strangely careless of the loss of time. This is rare in New York, where men walk with heads and legs too. They sauntered along, now and then casting an eye up at the house, and then walking on a way before turning.

One of these was the Juke of course; but his flowing beard and his high hat and his velvet jacket had disappeared, and he was now plain Mike Mulloy.

The other wore a fur-trimmed cap, and a thick Canadian cloak with a sort of hood; thick shoes nailed heavily, completed him below. Have we seen this man before? It was not the country-dressed man who once watched for Luly here, nor was it the city porter who had followed her and lied to her to her hurt;—neither of these: and yet it was the same man, none other than Mr. Tom Eustis.

He had discovered that his bird had flown, had escaped his snare; and now he was curiously watching to know if she had flown back to her nest. He did not go to the house, and ring the bell, and ask the question,

and get his answer;—of course not. But why did not the Juke march boldly up and ask for Mr. Percival or his wife, and tell them his strange story, and let them know where Luly was, and get them to come and help her; and so relieve their fears, and give them peace?

You may ask these questions, and the only answer to be had is,—it was not his way. He was suspicious, he was ignorant of what had been going on, and he was watching and waiting and expecting that *something* would happen, to show him how to act.

All that day these two men hung about, and now and then they met one another. It was not possible that they should not by and by notice one another; they did of course, and each wondered what the other was about; though neither supposed that both were watching the same nest.

"It's a mane lookin' felley anyway," said Mike to himself—"an' it would be a good job to brake his head open and find out what diviltry's inside it. It's a mane lookin' felley." He ruminated upon this point; but as the man managed to keep on the other side of the street from him, he did not break open his head, as he had thought of doing.

Tom Eustis saw Mike, but only knew or cared enough to keep out of his way and escape observation, so as to watch what was going on at the Percival house.

But neither saw anything to reward his patience; for Edward Percival was a sick man and lay at home nerveless and spiritless. His wife and he were reconciled, and she was assiduous and kind in her care. But he did not keep up. What was life worth? what was now

worth living and working and worrying for? Little truly; for he had no occupation or interest but to make money; and now that Luly had disappeared, the strongest motive for doing that, was for the time taken away. His wife, it is true, had become like her old self once more, and did what she might to supply his want; but something within told him he could not fully trust her; that she was only playing; that she was not a true, honest, loving, generous woman. This was not in words, but it was whispered in his soul, and it is certain that he did not take her in his arms and make her a part of himself as he did Luly.

Neither the Juke nor Tom Eustis learned anything that day that they wished to know.

The next day Mike was on his ground early enough. He believed that he should see Mr. Percival come out of his door after breakfast; and then he might discover something. He had not gone over his walk more than twice, when he saw his companion and watcher of yesterday appear;—much disgusted was he.

"What the divil's he here for anyway?" was the effect of his presence. He watched uncomfortably for a while, and at last brushing up to him, and speaking quietly but grimly, he said,—

"Wer' ye watchin' to see me now?"

"No, no,"—said Tom Eustis;—"not at all, my man,"—

"Because if ye wer', ye might chance to get a crack on the very top o' yer head, and it would be sure to spoil the cockadoodle thing ye put on it,—eh?"

Eustis moved away uneasily. It would never do to

get into a row with this man, right under the noses of the people who might be watching to find *him;* for if Luly had got home, and it was fair to suppose she had, Mr. Percival of course would be on the lookout to discover the man who had waylaid her. He was obliged to abandon the field and leave it to our friend the Juke; who watched his suspicious friend out of sight and then returned to duty. It was not until past eleven o'clock that the front door opened. Mike saw the first crack it made,—and then Mr. Percival walked feebly down. Face and walk both showed the wearing anxiety he had suffered. He went slowly down the street. Mike followed him—should he speak to him or not? He followed for a square or two, and then stepping alongside, he dropped the fine Italian brogue and spoke out naturally—

"A fine morning to ye indeed, Mr. Percival." Mr. Percival looked at him with a listless eye,—some beggar or man out of work of course:—he did not recognize that Mike was "the Juke"—not at all: for who would recognize any Duke without his velvets and finery? And these Mike had left behind him.

"I've got nothing for you, my man," said Mr. Percival slowly.

"No bedad, but I've got something for you!"

"Then why don't you leave it at the house, my man?"

"An' how should I lave it at the house, when I can't lave it at all?"

Mr. Percival looked at him inquiringly;—what was the man after?

"Now where's the little Luly anyway?" said Mike, plunging into the matter up to his neck.

Mr. Percival seized his arm—"What—what do you know about her?—tell me—do you know *anything* about her?"

"Bedad—I do!"

"Then tell it, man, tell it!" said Mr. Percival eagerly. "What, what? Where is she? tell me man, tell me!"

Mike was now provokingly cool.

"Then ye don't know where she is—at all?"

"Oh, man," beseeched Mr. Percival, "if you know anything of the child tell it to me, and I will reward you to the half of my fortune."

There was no doubting the words and tone of the man; Mike knew they were true.

"I'll tell ye, sir, an' it's the blessed truth—and yer not to be rushin' away as if ye wer mad afther her:—she's in her bed wid me, and the Misthress has her in hand, and the blessed Virgin and all the holy angels is watchin' over her, and that's where she is, an' there's no lie about it."

XXXIII.

GREEN EYED.

It was but the work of a few minutes for Mr. Percical to place himself by the bedside of Luly:—there he sat and held her hand, and smoothed her hair, and bathed her forehead as tenderly as any woman could have done it; and had Luly been conscious, she would have known that it was more lovingly done than could have been done by any other hand; but she was not conscious. The fever was upon her, and her poor head was hot with its fiery fingers. Mr. Percival sent for a doctor, and for Mrs. Percival, and his first impulse was to have her carried at once to his house. But the Juke protested, and Misthress Mulloy protested, and the doctor stood by their views.

"No," said Mike, "the Misthress has had the child in hand before, and she knows, and the holy Virgin blesses all she does, and ye must lave her where she is, and I tell ye she'll do well enough:—she'll not die, not a bit of it, sir."

She did not die, but she had a weary time of it, and she was tended by the Misthress and by the Juke, and by Mrs. Percival, and more than all by Edward Percival himself; and then, as Mike said, the blessed Virgin and

the holy angels watched over her, and by and by she slept calmly; and then she opened her eyes calmly, and they were sweet and soft and very weak; but she could see loving faces bent over her; and she could hear loving words said in her ears, and she began to be happy, and to get better and stronger; but slowly, very slowly.

These days of convalescence are among the most delicious of all, for then everybody says out and acts out all the kind and pleasant things, which at other times they only feel in a vague sort of way and never express. It is a great mistake that people do not say and do these pleasant things to well people too. It would make life more bearable, more like Heaven; for in Heaven I take it, the blessed spirits do not only praise God, but praise one another.

The days of convalescence passed, and passed delightfully, and in her own little room Luly now enjoyed her life, which seemed to have been plucked-up out of the pit. And Brit enjoyed his life too, for now there was no embargo on him. He was allowed to be with his mistress when he or she pleased, and not Mrs. Percival nor Mr. Tobbots ventured to object.

But after these days there was no more going to school, no more risks were to be run. Investigation failed to discover the author of the outrage;—everything was covered up, all had vanished from No. — Cannon Street,—even Juke's organ and monkey had disappeared. But they were at once replaced by a new and gorgeous outfit, which made him the admiration and envy of all the region about Avenue A.

Luly grew now at home, carefully watched and care-

fully taught. She grew in grace and loveliness, and more and more she became the inseparable companion and friend of Mr. Percival. For a while, he hardly dared trust her out of his sight; he feared some other dreadful thing would come upon her, and upon him; and he gave strict directions that she should not go out unattended; either he or Mrs. Percival must go out with her. But the lightning never strikes twice in the same spot; and it was not likely that any man would repeat such an outrage as had once been attempted and had failed.

But in this world like causes produce like effects. It was impossible that Mrs. Percival should see all this tender affection which her husband now lavished upon Luly, and not suffer from it. She saw it and did suffer. At first she was patient, because she knew well what a deprivation her husband was reacting from. She knew that a famished man will greedily seize and devour food even to repletion. But she looked to see an end to it; and that then he would come back to his first love. She did not propose to be ignored or slighted, or to be the less loved, because Luly had been found. During these two weeks of Luly's disappearance she had tasted of happiness, and had settled into her place as the sole occupant of the empty heart of Edward Percival. It must be admitted that the news of the discovery of the girl had not excited in her, that intense joy, which had filled the soul of her husband; and yet she had been sincerely glad to know that Luly was rescued from a terrible fate. Had the child died, she would have grieved sincerely, and have cherished her memory

tenderly, almost as if she had been her own. But living, she did not, and perhaps could not love her as her own child. There were two, yes three explanations of this:—one was, that it did not consist with her theories, it was not quite proper to do so; another, that she was always considering the child as a reminder of duty, one to whom or for whom she *must* do something, and too often that something was either irksome or distasteful; and another was, that her nature did not lead her to go out of herself to love anybody. It is hardly to be believed that Mrs. Matilda Percival would have been willing to love her own children, had she had them, to the neglect or sacrifice of herself.

How far she was responsible for the glaring imperfections of her own nature, who can say? It seems that the only respectable theory of man's existence here on earth is, that he may while here be overcoming these imperfections and bringing himself more and more into harmony with the divine soul. Except upon this theory the miserable business of life is most ridiculous. It seems, however, that each individual man or woman must grow in one or two directions, either to become better or worse—less selfish or more selfish,—nobody stands still. Now Mrs. Percival did not grow less selfish; on the contrary, the feeling or passion of selfishness did overshadow her life, and did grow with what it fed on. She had never learned that "Love is the fulfilling of the law." *To be loved*, seemed to her the highest end of existence.

Well, she must go her own road, as all must; none can hinder her, few can help; and she must take the

consequences. Mrs. Percival grew, and grew stronger in her own purposes, we may well believe. She was not one of those wishy-washy women who melt down into inanition and nothingness. She stood firm on her feet and walked onward with a strong sense of individuality and self-value. Being sure of herself and confident of her purpose, she did not permit herself to doubt that she should win, or to doubt that she ought to win.

Shall we venture to say that she ought not to have had, ought not to have insisted upon, the whole and entire love of her husband? Shall we venture to say that he ought to have loved her with his whole soul, and Luly not at all, or only with a mild effulgence? This may be said in extenuation—if he needs it—of Mr. Edward Percival. Love is not a matter of bargain or purchase, so much for so much; it is never to be got by demanding it: "stand and deliver" will produce gold but not love. He or she who *gives* love—gives lavishly—will get it, if at all, and lavishly; not always of course, because there are subtle points of touch invisible to mortal sense, and they may be positive or negative.

There is therefore no rule about it, and none can be laid down. It comes to this, however:—if people have been so unfortunate as to marry upon imperfect affinities, as most do, they will not improve themselves by harping upon those imperfections.

This, Mrs. Percival did not fully understand as we do, and therefore she did harp upon the fact, that Edward Percival did not love her as she felt she deserved to be loved; and the more she harped upon it, the less loving and the less lovely she became; and so

she weakened herself in the very artillery which she needed to win her battle. The return of Luly did not tend to make matters better, rather worse; for Mr. Percival did not get over his longing for Luly, it increased rather; and as she grew older she daily became more and more companionable to him, so that they read together, and walked together, and rode together; and sometimes,—there is not a doubt of it—to the neglect, involuntary though it was, of Mrs. Percival, who was not in full accord.

She saw and felt this, but could she go to them and say it? It would have been better perhaps if she had done so; better is a blazing than a long smouldering volcano, for when the convulsion does come, it is sure to be destructive. But it would have been the part of a wise woman to have put herself in accord with the husband and child, in some way; it would have been better to have walked and rode and read with them, to have been interested in what interested them, to have gone where they went, and to have liked, or at least tolerated, what they liked. But that was not Mrs. Percival's way;—she was bent upon her *duty*, and this in her case poisoned all. She was most assiduous with Luly, she spared no pains to perfect her, in a worldly sense; she got teachers, and provided her with all that was proper for such superior people as Mr. and Mrs. Edward Percival to have provided. Luly responded to all this, and grew up to be a pride and a pleasure to both. And people said,—with some exceptions,—"that Mrs. Edward Percival had done her duty nobly by that poor thing that she had picked up in the street;" and

doubtless they looked forward, that Luly should be the heiress of the great property which Mr. Percival was gathering together.

He certainly intended it to be so, and was ready at the least sign to pour all that money could get into her lap. It was his only pleasure, or his greatest pleasure, to see her fine young face lit up with surprise and delight at some new thing he had found for her, or at some new pleasure he had discovered for her gratification.

At times this was gall and wormwood to Mrs. Percival; at times she yielded to the whispering of the green-eyed monster, and almost hated the unsuspecting girl, the cold or indifferent husband. He now did or attempted to do but little for his wife, except that he was ready to forward her wishes when she expressed them. But he was not watchful, nor was he a diviner of her thoughts and wishes, as he was of Luly's. And there were reasons enough for this beside the absence of love, though Mrs. Percival did not see them. Luly was young and was easily pleased, as Mrs. Percival was not; Luly was a loving and generous nature, as Mrs. Percival was not; and Luly was spontaneous and outspoken, as Mrs. Percival was not. It was easy to love Luly and to make her happy, it was difficult with Mrs. Percival; and we are prone to do the easier thing.

XXXIV.

AGAIN THE DOG.

Mr. Tom Eustis had failed in his scheme to bring disgrace to Edward Percival, and thus to visit him with a heavy and a bitter retribution. His plan had been well laid, and had been boldly played; but the interposition of Providence in the person of the poor organ-player had this time brought all to naught. Would he now abandon the field, and leave things to take their course? It might have been safe for him to do so, for there are so many devilish influences at work to mar man's fortunes, or at least his ambitions, that Mr. Eustis might, had he known it, have spared his efforts. Had he known what was working in the house of Edward Percival he might have been content, and so have plotted no more; but he did not know and he was not content, and he watched and waited. But he failed for the time to discover more, he did not for a long time know what had become of Luly, nor where she had disappeared to. But he watched and waited, and he finally discovered that she was alive and well, that she was again in the house of Edward Percival, and was carefully guarded, so that he could not in any common way reach her; nor could he strike him through her. And yet he did not rest,

nor did he abandon his purpose, fell and bitter as it was.

All this time, however, he did not neglect his own matters, but was assiduous and determined. Money he needed and must have, and money he got by attending to his mills and his merchandises. He prospered; for he was not now idle, nor a spendthrift. He made occasional visits to New York; though why to New York when Philadelphia was his natural metropolis no one knew. "Some girl" the gossips of Milford guessed of course, and so it was. But it was not such as they supposed; it was not a girl he loved but one that he hated, that took him there.

What a curious thing the real, secret history of a man's or woman's life is!—it is never written or told. There are secret vices, or wishes, or schemes, or crimes, which are never whispered or put into words; and there are hidden virtues and hopes and plans and goodnesses which cannot be told. Some say that one day these are all to be emblazoned, plain to all the assembled hosts of heaven, earth and hell. Who knows?

No one knew Tom Eustis's secret thoughts, plans or wishes. He was a close and a careful man—attentive to his duties of Church and State, though not urgent; he did what was necessary, and was looked to as a rising and a valuable man; for he paid his notes and made good lumber, and met the wages of his men every Saturday night, and went to church once at least on Sunday, and always put something into the plate; and he even sang a stave or two of the psalm, which seemed after a sort to commit him to the religious party;—

though so far he had failed to become a "professor." The old ladies could not understand it why such a fine young man as he had got to be, did not "come forward and jine"; and as he grew older that question was not solved by their philosophy. They were wont to talk him over, and they were sure—"if Squire Bostwick's daughter did get him, she'd make him a church-member certain;"—"he'd jine them, for, there was nobody more regular than Mary Ann Bostwick, nobody; and they'd pity the man that got her and didn't go along as straight as a needle;" and so on. He kept a fine pair of horses now for his own use, and in the fine weather he loved to drive through that fine country across the Jerseys to New York. He went on that road more than once, and past the spot where he had heard rather than seen, the carriage of Edward Percival crash into ruin; but he had no regrets, no compunctions. He would ride that race again had he but the chance; and would welcome the chance, but it will not come.

Not far from Tom Bellows's modest mansion was a clear brook of running water, where Eustis always stopped to water his horses; they loved the water, and he loved to give it to them. As they three were thus enjoying themselves one pleasant afternoon, our friend Tom appeared with his cows, and as they too loved the water and stopped to drink it, what so natural and easy as to have a little talk? Tom had not too many people to talk to or with. So he began it—

"Going to York, I dare say? Everybody does go to York that can, and yet there's the dumdest set of fools there ever you see; it beats all how so many on 'em

crowd in; they do say that they eat one another up;—I dun'no, I shouldn't myself like to eat sassages there; well, every man to his notion—some likes one thing and some another; but I say, give me a good hog for my eatin', that's the vittal for me. But,"—remembering the man was a stranger—"I've seen you along this road afore, and yet you may be one of them Yorkers yourself—be you?"

"No," said Eustis shaking his head, rather pleased with Tom's easy style of conversation. "No, I live in Pennsylvania."

"Well, that's what I thought,—that's a State *to* live in. There you've got something to eat without haulin' it a thousand miles. Why, there ain't an ounce of vittal in all York, but what we haul in to 'em; they'd jest starve if 'twasn't for us, they would;—and yet they put on the dumdest airs and think they're about equal to God A'mighty, some of 'em do. You'd think, to see some on 'em, that they thought they was God-A'mighty's first cousins, and was jest takin' a little walk down here out of heaven with their store clothes on, so as to let us see what sort o' creeters they had up there, and so as to encourage us in goin' to meetin', and so git in bimeby. Lord, there was one of 'em out here to my house once"—he paused a moment, perhaps to recall the angelic vision more clearly.

"Who was she—what was her name?" asked Eustis; for it seemed friendly to say something.

"Name? Eh, her name? Well it was Percyval"—Eustis started—"And I never could find out jest the right on't. I always thought there was some deviltry

agoin' that night. You see 'twas jest along there by that little knoll where you see the holler tree, just along there he was smashed up; and everything made into match-timber too. Well, I hauled him out o' them bushes;—about as nigh to kingdom-cum he was as a man need to be, cold as a piece of meat, and the blood tricklin' out of a gash along here"—putting his finger on his temple.—"I thought he was gone up. And what saved him? Nothing but me and old Nance a' rubbin' him. Well he come-to, and then *she* come out, and Lord! you'd ha' thought he was the angel Gabriel, not a cent less, the way she went on;—but I said to her bimeby—'Miss Percyval, 'tain't no use tryin' to swell out here; here's the little house at your service, and so make the best on't;—no use tryin' to bile the ocean in a tea-kittle; you can't eat no more 'n your fodder if you *be* an ox.—I'm Tom Bellows, and you 're Miss Percyval, and that's all there is of it;' she come right down and was as good as anybody. The fact is, I'd as soon 'a had her as old Nance to work round the house after she'd been here a week. She was as handy as a hired gal. But Lord, at first you'd ha' thought she'd want to have some pavements brought out for her to walk in the garden with;—she got right over it when I talked to her, and took as good care o' that man as any nuss you could hire."

Eustis was now alive, though he showed no special interest;—he said to Tom—

"They paid you well no doubt?"—

"Yes, lots of money they have, but what good does it do 'em? I've a notion there was some deviltry in it,

but I couldn't find out what. You see a little while afore that I carried in a woman and a child in my wagon,—they said they come from the west'ard;—well, the woman was nigh dead, but that's neither here nor there;—I giv her a lift, and when I backed up there to the market, she got right down and wanted to go away;—and she said she wanted to know where Mr. Percyval lived; and blast me if I don't think there was some cussedness in it. And then this smash-up and all, it seemed to me as though there was a kind o' judgment of heaven got in among 'em; and so everything got so confoundedly mixed up, that I couldn't make head nor tail of any of it; and there's where 'tis."—

Could not Tom Eustis have made things more clear to Tom Bellows? Eustis was startled, for who was this woman and child who were looking for Mr. Percival? Could they have been any other than his lost sister?

"What became of the woman and child?" he asked.

"That's jest what I wanted to know," said Tom. "I was the dumdest fool to let 'em go. I tell you, stranger, I took a notion to that woman; she was so softly, quiet-like; didn't go to cryin' and hollerin' about herself and complainin' of all creation.—I took a notion to her, and I was the dumdest fool, that I didn't bring 'em both back here and keep 'em. I could ha' done it as well as not; there was the little room off the kitchen that they might 'a had, and I'd 'a built on a room or two to make 'em comfortable. I should ha' had a muss with old Nance I s'pose, for if there's anything in all nature that a woman can't abide, it's another woman. Now old Nance is nothing but a nigger, but she's lived with me

so long that she's a'most white. But I'd 'a made her behave, if that woman and that baby had come back. I've always wanted a baby round, and it was such a dum good chance to get one for nothin' ready-made;—now I dare say I shan't have one, for as for going courtin' and having a minister and a spree and all that, it's such dum'd nonsense, I never could do it."

Eustis might have laughed, had this story been told about anybody but one whom he believed to have been his only sister; but he was touched and grateful for Tom's good feeling and rude kindliness, and he got out a piece of gold and tossed it to Tom, saying,

"Here, my good fellow, take that"—

"Hey!"—with some surprise and disgust—"What's that for?" Tom looked at it as it lay on the ground.

"O, put it in your pocket and buy yourself some tobacco, or something you want."

"Why, stranger, I don't want no tobacco nor nothing," said Tom looking at him. "I hain't done nothing for *you*, so what do I want with your money? We give nothing for nothing out here, that's the way we do. I don't want no money. Bless you, I've got over four hundred in the bank now, and don't borrow a cent. No, stranger, you must pick up your money and keep it, for you'll want it some day. I never throw money round that way, I don't. Good-bye."

Tom was a little hurt and was moving off, when Eustis stopped him; he did not wish to wound the good fellow.

"Pardon me;—it was a foolish thing perhaps, but it was meant well. Can't you tell me something more

about that woman and child? I should like to know, because there was a woman went from my town once in that way—"

"Now you don't say so!" exclaimed Tom. "Well, I wish I could, but I don't know, I've asked everybody; but in that dum'd city you might as well ask 'em where the water of the Hudson river comes from as to ask 'em about anything but the price of goods; that's all they know. But I'll tell you this, stranger, that very day I lost the handsomest and the toughest and the stanchest dog you ever see; and if them sassage fellers didn't steal him it's my opinion he went off after that woman and child. I never could make out what it meant, but dogs knows. I never knew a dog to go off after one of them cold-blooded cusses, never:—and it's my opinion Brit knew I wanted that woman took care of, and so he went to do it. Dogs knows. It *was* kind of hard wan't it"—he asked looking at Eustis, "to lose such a dog and such a baby as that in one day?"

Eustis turned the matter over swiftly in his mind; it did not seem that anything more was to be got out of Tom Bellows, and as his horses were now freshened-up, he checked up their heads and got in prepared to drive away.

"I say,"— said Tom,—"you may jest as well pick up your money, 'cause somebody'll come along and do it, and we shall have a big drunk out of it some way; for it's my notion that money a man don't work for, don't do him no sort of good"—

"O you must do something with it," said Eustis—"give it to somebody who does want it; you'll find

somebody that's not so rich as you are round here." He started his horses, when Tom again called after him—

"About that dog—if you *should* see anything of him, yallerish white with a spot over the left eye and as pretty a head as ever you see, just bring him back with you, and I'll pay the damage. If you'll do that, stranger, I'll manage to see to your money,—eh?"

Eustis nodded as he drove away. Tom stood a moment looking at the gold, then he picked it up and carried it in his hand.

"What shall I do with the dum thing? It's four mile down to meetin' or I'd take it along and put it in the missionary box, only there's no knowing what they do with all the money. For my part I'm wonderin' if God A'mighty meant them injuns and niggers to be white folks, why he didn't make 'em so. It's the dumdest foolishest piece of business any way ever *I* see. Well, I know wheat's wheat, and corn's corn, and 'taters is 'taters, and that's enough for me. I'll give it to old Nance: but then she'll be off 'fore night down to Paterson to spend it; she'll have a new red handkercher, and a piece of ribbin 'fore sun-down; and I shall haf to go without my dinner; that's what it 'll come to. Well, let the old nigger go,—she don't have much glory out of this world anyway, she don't. Let her go!"

Such were Tom's moral reflections as he prepared to dispense Mr. Eustis's bounty.

Old Nance *was* delighted, and "blessed de chile," and

she *did* go down to Paterson before night, and *did* come back with a new red handkerchief, and some ribbon; and Tom *did* go without his dinner that day. But he didn't mind it.

XXXV.

MEN THAT'S MOURNING DON'T DO THAT WAY.

WHAT would small towns do, if all the people went on regularly and moved like clock-work and were never wicked? They would have nothing to talk about of course. For as peaceful and prosperous nations, if there ever were any, can have had no history, so a good and steady town can have no gossip. History is taken up with the robbings and fightings and cruelties and crimes of the great; so the gossips of a town deal with the weaknesses and follies and sins and crimes of their neighbors; and how thankful ought they to have been to Mr. Tom Eustis for furnishing them topics for talk. They were not grateful, though they did talk a great deal about him. How delighted they might have been, had they only known about his race with Mr. Percival; how fascinated had they known of the cunning trick he played with Luly; and how charmed if they had but guessed what he still meant to do.

I anticipate a vote of thanks, from such of them as still live, for the revelation I am making of the secret history of this man about whom they wondered and talked; and if I do not receive it, it will be only another striking proof of the ingratitude of Republics.

If I do not receive it, I will have my revenge by putting my next story in Africa, so that they can have no sort of pleasure or interest in it.

Well, let us go on with the story. Time passed. Two of the ladies of Milford sat in the dusk together; neither was young, neither beautiful; but they had human sympathies, and greeds, and interests left; and though they speculated little upon their own lives, they were curious about the small world around them.

"I say, if Mary Ann Bostwick's going to marry him, why don't she? that's what I want to know."

"Why, Miss Finley, how you do talk! Just as if she could go out and ketch hold of him, and have him up afore meeting and make him marry her. Why Mary Ann Bostwick's not the girl to do that kind of thing, no how."

"Well, I'd know what was what, if I was she. If he has got a wife down to York, I'd know it pretty quick."

"Why, Miss Finley, how's she going to know unless he tells her? and I guess men don't go round tellin' about the wives they have, as long's they're courtin' somebody else."—

"I tell you," said Mrs. Finley,—"she's a fool not to go up and face him and say it right out plain, 'Are you going to marry me or not?' If there was another woman in New York, don't you s'pose *I'd know it?* It's my opinion there is, and I'd know if I was Mary Ann Bostwick."

"Why, Miss Finley, how could you know it? Nobody knows it, for I've asked round of everybody I've seen, and nobody knows it. Old Sol Brigham, I asked

him, and he said he didn't believe a word of it, and how can Mary Ann do anything more about it?"

"I tell you there *is* another woman in York. Men don't go on this way forever, it ain't their natur. He's just danglin' round her, to please himself, and that's what they all do. If Mary Ann has a bit of spirit, she'd know about that other woman before she was a day older. I never had Mr. Finley hangin' round me that way; I brought him right up to the top 'o water as soon as I got the hook in, and I kept him gaspin' there till he said something; that's the way to do. Hangin' round don't do nothing. Then he's been going to see Mary Ann month in and month out, year in and year out. Why, she's got gray hairs in her head now. That's no way for a woman to do. What's a man going to do marrying a woman with gray hairs in her head! Mary Ann's a good girl enough, but she's not got a bit of sense. That other woman's got a hook in him in New York, and Mary Ann ought to know it."

Mrs. Finley's positiveness staggered Mrs. Pipkin.

"Who *is* the woman in New York?"

"Well, that I can't say, but she's there, and you may tell Sol Brigham so; and if I was you I'd let Mary Ann Bostwick know it too. Whether he's married to her or not that's another thing. But what's he going down there to stay a month at a time for, if there is not a woman in the pie? I tell you there is; and if I was minister Crook I'd know about it; I wouldn't have a man going on this way, half-pious like;—why don't he jine and be done with it, if he's all right? But he's not all right, he's got some woman business there at New York, depend on't."

"But you know, Miss Finley, there's his sister"—

"Poo–oo–oo–h!" protested Mrs. Finley.

"He's never given her up," persisted Mrs. Pipkin. "So Sol Brigham told me; he believes she's somewhere alive, and he fancies he can find her. Maybe that's what he goes for."

"Now, Miss Pipkin, how you do talk! Do you suppose a man that's looking for his *sister* puts on these shiny leather boots and has shirts made with inserting in the bosoms, and has a whole dozen of kid gloves in his draw, and essence bottles about, and all that sort of thing? Men that is mourning don't do that way, not as ever I see. No, there's some woman business about. He's cunning, Mr. Tom Eustis is, and just what it's for I *should* like to know. Depend on't he's only fooling Mary Ann Bostwick; just using her to cover up his tracks, that's every bit there is of it."

"Well, I don't understand it, I must say,"—sighed Mrs. Pipkin.

"Understand it! I understand it well enough. Just like a man. What's he keeping himself young this way for? Just nothing but to tickle that other woman in the city. Why, you couldn't think Tom Eustis was over thirty; but I know. I remember when that girl went off, and Tom was twenty then if he was a day."

"Well, he's got on well, for a man that was so near going to the bad, you'll confess that, Miss Finley?"

"No, I'll not confess it. He's got on, that's all very well; but what's the use of a man's getting on, as long as he don't help a woman to get on? As long as he don't divide he's nothing but a poor miserable, mean,

close-fisted, sharp-nosed, hard-hearted, miserly fellow; and that's what I think about it, if you must know, Miss Pipkin."

The warmth of Mrs. Finley's feelings carried her a little too far, and led her to do some injustice to Mr. Eustis. He, however, was not present and was not aware how poor a sample of humanity he had come to be. It may have been, possibly it was, a great pity that he could not and did not know the views that Mrs. Finley held. Possibly, though I doubt it, they would have influenced his life and changed his purpose—the purpose of his life; which as *we* know, and as Mrs. Finley wanted to know, was to humiliate Edward Percival. Through these years he had not abandoned that purpose, through these years he had worked and watched and waited for his opportunity, and it had not come. It had not come, and yet he had waited and watched, and he yet waited and watched. And he was away now, so that he did not learn for a week or two, what every person in Milford knew within twenty-four hours of the time when Mrs. Finley had confided it to Mrs. Pipkin, "that he had a woman in New York, but whether he was married to her or not was not certain."

It must be believed that the news was not pleasant news to Miss Bostwick. Not that she was a goose at all. But she had now known Mr. Tom Eustis for so long a time, that while she did not perhaps expect him to marry her, she felt poorer in that he had married some one else. So long as a man or a woman is unmarried, they, in a sense, belong to all the unmarried world; but once applied, appropriated, they have gone out of

our sphere. I have myself some, a very little of this feeling; I do not enjoy having some fellow that *I* have no interest in come along and gobble-up some dear creature whom, if I cannot indeed marry, I can at least like and love. But, my dear Miss Bostwick, it is and always has been so, and a good many kind hearts do go to waste in this world, because the flowers of love are not carefully tended by a sympathetic hand.

Old Brigham determined he would sound Mr. Eustis upon this point when he came back. For Sol had his share of curiosity too, and he was not insensible to the charms of personal gossip.

Mr. Eustis came back of course; he rarely remained away more than a fortnight at a time; for he had business and affairs at home, which he was careful of too. He still lived on at "Brigham's," though he owned a house in the town, which all the town had thought was a premonition of a marriage; and with whom except Miss Bostwick? But he still lived on and on at Brigham's; and he made no explanations. Brigham went along with him up to his room the night of his return,—and after talking about indifferent matters said,

"Well, Mr. Tom, we've got you married since you've been away,"—

"That's kind at any rate, and saves me some trouble."

"But we have it that it's really so this time,"—

"Who says it?"

"Lord, who says it? Who ever does say such things? They come down out of the sky, Mr. Tom,—that's all. It's no use trying to explain anything in this world,

that's what *I* say. I wouldn't have a secret, Mr. Tom, not for a hundred dollars: I couldn't keep it; it would be out and round, and somebody 'd hear it if I never whispered it into my own breeches-pocket. '*They 'd say it.*' Lord knows how '*they*' get to know everything, but they do. Now it's no sort of use trying to keep a thing in; it will get out and they *will* know it. It's no sort of use trying to keep a secret, Mr. Tom."—Ah, old Sol didn't know what secrets Tom Eustis had kept so long.—"If you don't tell, Miss Finley will have it all out before you can say 'Across the water'; but shall I deny it? It's all nonsense anyway, for what's the use of making such a bother about anything in this world, that's what *I* say."

Tom reflected a moment. What did it matter whether they said he was married or was not?

"Who do they say I've married?"

"Somebody down to York. I guess they haven't got her name yet."

"Well, Sol, *I* guess we may as well wait till they get her name; and then I shall know as well as they." He laughed a little and old Sol laughed louder; and so they parted.

"Pooh!" said old Sol that night—"All nonsense. I tell ye he ain't married no more than I am. It's all nonsense."

"Well," said Jake, laughing derisively, "you are most deucedly married, three deep if I know—ho, ho, ho!"

XXXVI.

THE FIRST PARTY.

It is not a difficult thing to get into good houses in New York; into what is called "good society." Because a great city, where there are no classes or ranks, where all is fluid all in motion, where all are in a degree adventurers, where any may be rich, and so may have what all want, must be constantly changing; must be admitting new elements and dropping out old ones; must indeed desire new elements; and when those elements are men or women who combine with money, taste or intellect, or even gayety, they are welcome.

Mrs. Percival's house was brilliantly lighted on this cold night of January, 18—. The carpets were nicely covered with linen, the mantel-pieces were decked with delicious flowers; the halls were bowers of plants from which exhaled voluptuous odors; a fountain was playing in the dining-room, and all foretold a gay and joyous occasion. Such it was to be.

How shall I describe the beautiful girl who walked now into these elegant parlors? How give all those delicious details which novel writers love to dwell upon? I am unable to do it; I have not time nor space; and

beside it belongs to those slow old days of Walter Scott, who did it so well that I dare not attempt it.

She was wholly in white, and her close-fitting dress showed a beautiful bust, from which sprang rounded shoulders, a graceful neck; and then a head, less classic but more piquant than any the Greeks ever sculptured. Her arms were bare and white, and round, and dimpling:—O, I loved to look upon her that night. She was all in white, but in her dark hair was a single dark red rose-bud, just bursting into its perfect beauty; fit emblem of the lovely girl.

Was she as happy as she was beautiful? She walked across the room and seated herself by an open piano; she ran her hands slowly over the keys, and soft music came from her touch, such as never comes out of a piano when a "performer" plays it. Soft sounds, gentle sounds, plaintive sounds; not melancholy or wailing, but tender and soothing, perhaps a little sad. Why should she be sad? Why this night of all the year, when Mrs. Percival was to present to the world the little waif she had saved out of the sea, and who had grown into this beautiful creature? Why should she be sad? Life was all before her; there was a flush of expectation on her cheek, a sparkle of light in her eye, and yet the long silken lashes were for a moment wet with moisture. Perhaps she felt in the midst of her good fortune, in the flush of her success, that she was but a waif—a lonely creature, who had neither father nor mother in this world; perhaps she felt that she lived upon sufferance, that she had a right nowhere; not even in that house where her uncle, Mr. Edward Percival,

almost devoured her with his eyes, almost overwhelmed her with his lavish kindness.

Miss Lucy Percival was no longer a child, no longer a plaything, no longer a gay, laughing, careless girl, ready to enjoy, heedless of all else. She was in the porch of womanhood, and with a loving, sympathetic nature, which felt quickly the jangle of the chords of life. She knew now, she *felt* the difference between the love and care of her two friends; of her aunt, and her dear uncle. She knew too, she felt it, that there was a terrible want of harmony in that house:—what caused it she did not, could not know; but she did know that all there was not love and peace. And was she the cause, the unwilling, unhappy cause? It was a wretched thought or fear, one that she could not altogether banish. She felt the difference of the love of her aunt and her uncle toward herself; and yet she would not have whispered it, that Mrs. Percival was ever unkind, was ever anything but most kind; while Mr. Percival was loving-kindness itself. But the old trouble which has been touched more than once in these pages, had not been driven out never to return. It did return and it found a soil upon which it again took root and grew; so almost impossible is it to keep weeds out of the soul. Mrs. Percival was most assiduous, most attentive, most urgent that Luly should perfect herself, should come before the world to be admired and loved; nothing belonging to her must be poor or despised or unworthy. Therefore she had spared no pains and no money; therefore she now wished to launch her little boat upon a smooth and flattering sea.

But Mrs. Percival did not love Luly as her uncle did, not at all, she never had: there was always reserve—qualification—a holding back; a something which forbade the child, when a child, from throwing herself into her arms, to seek for consolation or caress. Thus it was with Mrs. Percival, while it was just the reverse with Mr. Percival; he went forward to meet her; his love, like impalpable fingers, was always out to touch and draw her to his heart. To his heart she loved to be drawn; his heart warmed hers; his breath was sweetness, his words music.

More and more Mrs. Percival—poor lady—had felt this difference, without knowing how, or being able to efface it. It annoyed and chafed her. More and more she chafed at the outspoken love of her husband to this child, at the thousand caresses and thoughts Luly called forth, which somehow seemed to belong to herself, and which in some inexplicable way she never now received.

Mrs. Percival knew Luly was not to blame, but not the less did she feel the deprivation; and she could not wholly restrain the expression of that deprivation. Was it not a wrong done her? Was she not being defrauded of her right? Was her husband not loving another—though only a child—better than he loved her? And was it not a bitter and a grievous thing? As Luly had grown, the love and admiration of Mr. Percival seemed to have grown with her. Poor Luly in some way felt this, felt that she was not the flux which should fuse these two diverse elements into one; but rather that, without intending it, she kept them two; and some-

times she could not but feel the pangs of jealousy which pierced Mrs. Percival's soul, in some strange way piercing her own by a sort of reflex.

In this most blind and unsatisfactory way have I endeavored to give you, dear reader, a clue to the hidden mystery in the lives of these three. Your superior sagacity or more vivid imagination must do the rest.

Luly sat pensive at the piano; the blazing lights were over her, the delicious fragrances about her, but she was the most attractive thing, the central figure in the room. She sat at the open piano, her listless fingers wandering over the keys, when she felt an arm around her and a gentle kiss upon her forehead. She looked up—it was Mr. Percival who stood over her.

"Oh, uncle, I am so glad you are here, I was beginning to feel *so* lonely."

"Why, Luly, you are happy to-night, are you not? This is *your* night—the night when you sail out upon the great sea of life."

"Yes, yes, uncle, I am happy;"—she could not permit him to think she was not—"but I don't know; I feel strangely. I feel as though I could not sail out, that I should be lost;—Oh, uncle, I cannot leave you; tell me that, that I am never to leave you—never!"

"Never, my dear child, so long as I can help it. I have myself been most strongly moved. It is I who have most to fear. Now I am in danger of losing my pretty pet; for whoever sees her will wish to get her away from me, and what can I do to keep her?"

Tears now wet her grateful eyes; she put her arms

around his neck and whispered, "Never, dear, dear uncle"—

"Why!" exclaimed Mrs. Percival, entering the room —"what are you doing? Lucy, my child, it is very strange when you are dressed to be doing so, deranging your hair and your dress. Do remember that you are a young lady now, and that it is quite ridiculous to be doing such childish things. Pray go to your room and let Mrs. Potts rearrange you; in a few moments you will be wanted."

Luly went away abashed and chilled; but was it not so?—was it not as her aunt had said?

"Mr. Percival, how many times must I say that you spoil Miss Lucy? She is now a young lady, and I do hope you will try to remember it. It really is too much. When she was a child I permitted these things, but now really it cannot go on. I do hope out of regard to the opinions of the world, if not of deference to me, your wife, you will not permit yourself to indulge in such childish practices."

He bowed; the music struck up and thus this slight matrimonial collision ended for the time.

Luly controlled her feelings; it was no time to give way to them; but she went slowly up stairs, wondering why she did not love her aunt as she did her uncle; wondering whether it was wrong to love him as she did; wondering why her aunt would not let him love her as he did; and altogether in a wretched state, not at all suited to a girl on the night of her first party. The flush of expectation had fled from her cheek, the light from her eye, and now she had to listen to the laments

of Mrs. Potts at her looking like a fright, etc. But she heard from below the ringing of bells, the opening and shutting of doors, the rustle of dresses, and those strangely inspiriting sounds of music, which so wonderfully thrill the senses; and she went down again, radiant and beaming. Mrs. Percival received her, also radiant and beaming; no one could or would believe that Mrs. Percival had ever had or could have a jealous pang as to the lovely girl who stood by her side; upon whom she smiled so graciously; whom she presented to her friends so impressively. No one could have believed it, except those who know what a hollow lie this world has come to be, and how society walks over a crust which covers fire. But this book is not intended to reveal secrets or to teach lessons.

The rooms were thronged, few declined the first invitation they had had to enter the house of Mrs. Edward Percival, and many were curious to know what this girl was like, whose curious history they knew something about. Mrs. Percival was radiant and beaming; she was once more the centre of that "society"—which she had once loved; she smiled on all, she had a word for all, she moved like a queen. Mr. Percival was of small account in this scene. It is not the place for man's triumph, at least after he passes the age of twenty-four. But he was useful—he paid the bills. He enjoyed, however, the exhilaration of Luly, who this night tasted the sweets of flattery and success. Who did, who could fail to admire her? He watched her bright face and her quick smile and her arch looks with—with a father's pride; and he determined that *she* should be happy, if any act

of his could make her so. For himself that day was past. His own life was a failure and a falsehood, and he could now only live in his regrets and repentances, except that Luly led him forward into the future with hope by her side.

> "There was music, there was dancing,
> There was chatting with the beaux"

that night, and all agreed to banish care and forget trouble. Why not? Parties may be useful to promote such a result.

It was late in the evening when Mr. Dubois Templeton appeared with a friend. He had not yet made a fortune nor married one; but he kept young, and gay, and careless, and elastic. His gloves and his boots were unexceptionable as ever, and his hair was parted in the middle like the pictures of St. John as ever, and he had a jaunty step such as he always had, and his teeth were white and his manners genial.

Mrs. Percival was glad to receive him, and his friend Mr. Redfield too; who was a stranger to her, but welcome of course for Mr. Templeton's sake;—of course. Mr. Percival was not far away, and he saw Mr. Templeton and saw his friend, as they bowed and spoke to Mrs. Percival and Luly. A pang of jealousy or some sinister feeling moved his heart; for these are the men, he knew, who touch and fascinate and bewitch the hearts of women. Smooth, confident, flattering, seductive, would they not win Luly away from him? Must he now live in dread and doubt? Must he henceforth live on in daily expectation of the hour when she should

say,—"I love *him*, not *you* any more;—*he* is necessary for my happiness, not *you*;—I abandon *you* to go to *him*."

And then he must be alone and desolate, when that day comes: for to him Matilda Staunton was no longer a lover, no longer a charmer, no longer a dear friend; all this had departed, and never now to return.

He felt in his heart that these men were dangerous, yet he could not go to them and say,—"Go out of my house and never enter it again!" That would have consigned him to a mad-house. Nor could he spend his time in watching and guarding his dear girl against their wiles.

This was preposterous:—he knew nothing against them; had no reason to suspect them: it was certainly preposterous. To a woman of Mrs. Percival's age, the flattering attentions of a younger man, like Dubois Templeton, are always pleasant. She accepted them and took his arm and walked away, leaving Luly with Mr. Redfield.

Luly was not alarmed at being left with Mr. Redfield; she had none of those feelings which so moved Mr. Percival against him and his friend; he was gentle and deferential, and ready to listen to her slightest word. He inspired her, indeed, with a strange kind of confidence—why, she did not know. He was older than she, perhaps that was a reason for it; and he spoke with a low voice; and yet there was not a particle of diffidence or sheepishness about him. No, he was a man who undoubtedly knew his own value, but was most ready to recognize hers; and that is always most grate-

ful and flattering to any, and especially to one so young as Luly, who has not yet learned to know her full worth. He was not so young as she of course, but it would have been difficult to say what was his age; he might have been twenty-five or thirty-five or even forty; but Luly thought nothing about it; he was an agreeable companion at any rate, and he had not asked her to marry him; what cared she about his age or about him at all, except to be civil to him?

He attended her, he said most pleasant and acceptable things; he recognized her as a woman, not a child; he considered what she said, and led her on to say more; he did not think her a trifling, foolish girl; he asked her opinions and treated her as an equal, as a person of mind and sense. Luly could not fail to feel that this was a superior man, one whom it would be a satisfaction to know; and it was with a slight feeling of regret that she left him, to take her place in the dance.

We will not prolong this scene, because it does not help on the story. The party was one of the most brilliant of the season, and Mrs. Percival's niece was at once accepted as one of the loveliest and most to be desired of New York's fair daughters. But "society" did not fail to remember that she was "nobody's daughter," and therefore a man who made love to her need not expect to marry a fortune. "Nobody knew what Edward Percival was going to do with his money,"—so *they* said.

XXXVII.

BLOATED ARISTOCRATS.

"Rather sweet on Miss Lucy to-night, eh? were you not?" asked Templeton, as they walked away to their Club after the ball.

"So-so," replied Redfield carelessly—"She is a nice young thing enough."

"Nice young thing? By Jove!" replied Templeton, "if I knew what the old fellow was going to do with his money, I'd pounce down upon her like a hawk upon a pullet."

"If he was going to give all his money to Mrs. Percival, or to the Osage Mission, would you pounce?"

"Eh?—not immediately. I should take time—time to consider in that case. By Jove! there ought to be a law compelling these old Cocks to settle so much, say half their fortune, on their daughters, under penalty of death; then a man could know what he was about.—But this jumping in the dark is fearful, fearful. I've stood on the brink again and again, but I could not take the jump."

Redfield laughed out at Templeton's earnestness.

"Oh, it's all very well for you, Redfield, to laugh—who have got your pile; but by Jove! to us poor devils who always want and never have, it is no joke. We

stand off and look, and our mouths water at the delicious morsels which we can't hope to eat, knowing all the time that we are the men *they* want; and we curse our fates when we see some of these dull, plodding, money-making fellows gobble up the tit-bits as though they were so many sweet-breads. By heavens! I'm for having a new deal."

"How do you know Mr. Percival is *not* going to make this girl rich?" asked Redfield. Perhaps *he* too had some interest in knowing.

"Know? Why they're all alike. There never was a man yet who picked up a gutter child, and brought it up as his own, who did not by and by, sooner or later, throw it back into the gutter again. He's sure to do it. You'll see. Percival has got his will made, and when he dies, you'll find $10,000 given to this, and $10,000 to that, and $10,000 to the other humbugging thing,—and then will come in the interest of a hundred thousand to Mrs. Percival *for life*—you'll observe, for *life only;* but then come all sorts of nephews and nieces and one-eyed relations; people without teeth, and people with shaking-palsy, and women with pimply-faces; people with a hungry look, who have tape-worm, and women with white-headed children all of a size, and men with a cork-heel and a spring in the knee, and men with white fur hats, and women with black crape bonnets two hundred years old at least, and men with chalky fingers, and women who take opium, and men with trousers shiny about the knees, and they who wear green spectacles of both sexes; and among them will be distressed ministers with large families and small flocks,

and women who have lived for years on tea and pie:—these all will come up out of strange places, and they will be '*relatives of the deceased*,' and they will swallow up his fortune if it was ten times as large as it is, as a sponge sucks up water and hides it:—and then—then they will fight over it forever. That's the way *his* fortune will go, and so Miss Lucy and Miss Lucy's husband will not become 'bloated aristocrats.' Now you see, Redfield, my highest ambition is to become a bloated aristocrat, therefore I must leave that delicious morsel to some of you fellows who have a saintly contempt for money. *I* am of the earth earthy."

"Why not go out a few years into Pennsylvania and dig in the coal mines?" asked Redfield—"then you come back a 'bloated aristocrat,' and delicious morsels *drop* into your mouth. That is one way of taking your food."

"Too old, too old! Can't do it, Redfield. It's no use to talk to me. I am chained to this pavement, and here I shall drag along till I marry or starve. But by heavens you are right! *You* have got the game in your own hands, and I say play it and win. Such a girl as that is worth courting:—if I knew old Percival would plank the coin I would take a hand myself: I would, but not if you are for it."

Redfield laughed a little. "Don't hesitate; you are the Don Giovanni, whose renown spreads far. Marry, and let us see you made into a good steady fellow before we get too old to enjoy it; come now."

"No, no—don't chaff. It's of no use. *You* are the man."

"Templeton," said Redfield slowly, "don't tempt me. I shall never marry until I have *done my work.*"

"Done your work! What the deuce does that mean? I don't know an idler fellow in all the town. Done your work? I should say that a man who had a good bank balance, had got through with that sort of nonsense. Work! Why, Redfield, I am afraid you are an infidel; —don't you know work is a curse, and that we are bound to get rid of it? Work! Hang me if I would do an hour of it, if I were not whipped up by old necessity. By the way, Redfield, lend me fifty dollars, for a week, till I can turn round? Come, 'twon't damage you, and it will do me a confounded favor."

Redfield lent him the money, as a matter of course. He was willing to pay him for what he had done and for what he expected him to do. Templeton always made his Club friends contribute: he did not introduce them into "good society" for nothing:—why should he indeed?

XXXVIII.

A SECRET TOLD.

It is easy for agreeable men and idle men to be agreeable and idle; that is a truism few will care to dispute. Templeton and Redfield were of this class. Now, what are called the "upper classes" of ladies in a city, need a certain amount of this kind of man, and to them they cannot but be welcome. Both Templeton and Redfield were at leisure, they were good-looking, they were young, they wore good clothes, they knew enough of the gossip of the town, and Redfield at least had money. That was certain. What more was known about him was, that he had cattle farms in the West, and that his herds were large and profitable. It was also reported of him that he had coal lands in Pennsylvania, and what beside no one knew. But a man who had nice rooms, who kept a pair of fine and stylish—not fast—horses, knew how to read and write, and could dance the German, that man was a desirable match;—it could not be otherwise. There were various mammas with marriageable daughters, who had no doubts on this point; and doors were opened wide to admit him. He rose rapidly in favor, and the winter passed pleasantly and swiftly away. Once, and once

only, he was absent for a month or so, and it caused profound sorrow. Where had he gone? No one knew, not even Mr. Templeton himself. And Templeton regretted it deeply; for it is a pleasant thing to have a pleasant friend who is willing to lend fifty dollars at short notice, and asks no security.

But he came back, and the hearts of many beat happily; the anxieties of Mr. Dubois Templeton were allayed. He borrowed fifty dollars at once and slept well.

At no house were these two more welcome perhaps than at Mrs. Percival's. Not that Mrs. Percival was a greedy match-maker, but she knew, as all women know, that a woman ought to and must be married sooner or later; and it had been rapidly growing upon her, that if Luly now were to make an eligible match, and especially one which should take her away from the city, it might, yes it would be better. The breach had widened, there was not harmony between herself and Edward Percival. He sought Luly and lived with her and petted and spoiled and loved her, in a way Mrs. Percival could not approve. For a time he had attempted to calm or banish this miserable jealousy, but he had failed to do it, because in truth he *did* love Luly best, and Mrs. Percival could not but know it; and she could not pardon it, or submit to it. She kept the sore alive and red with irritation, so that the man at times fled from his own house. He had abandoned the effort, longer to placate or satisfy his wife; and that is a desperate condition for a man to come to, miserable for a woman to have to know it.

Edward Percival knew the curse was following him, but he could not escape it; nor could he tell when it would strike him. His anxieties now hung around Luly; and mingled with his tender love was an indefinable fear. He felt this fear, but could do nothing to escape from it. Had it not been for Mrs. Percival, he would have taken Luly and fled to some secret spot where the two could have lived their lives in peace. But Mr. Percival was a man of the world, he had all his life been a conventional man, he had hated and feared scandal, he had been a conformist in all things; he could not break down all these usages and habits which had grown around him and which covered him in as the shell does the oyster, and rush madly from his sphere. So he lived on and endured, as he best could. And she, his wife, the handsome Matilda Staunton, lived on and endured as she best could; and each cursed a wretched fate and blamed the other.

Mrs. Percival found what comfort she could in "the world;" and in the flattering talk of Dubois Templeton she found a certain occupation or distraction for her disappointed expectations. Both he and Redfield were habitués of her house; which they too enjoyed. Templeton was willing, of course, to talk with Mrs. Percival, and Redfield was glad to talk with Luly. He enjoyed her voice and sang with her himself in a way that thrilled her soul. She liked him, she could not help liking; and why should she wish to help liking him? But did she wish to love him or did she wish him to love her? Such questions she had never asked herself; it is not likely she had dreamed of them, for she was

but in the very morning hour of the journey of life, and she was only eager to see and know the thousand things which lined the way. She was not yet beginning to appropriate to herself, and to pluck and eat of the fruit, or to stretch out for that which was beyond her reach. She enjoyed all;—all except that she shrank from the sharp temper which Mrs. Percival occasionally, but very rarely, betrayed; and she was pained at the secret or silent pain, which she knew her uncle suffered.

And what was Redfield doing? Was he indeed making love, and did he mean to win the waif, which had floated on to such a doubtful shore?

"Life is a strange road is it not, Miss Percival?" he asked, one spring evening, as they were sitting at the open parlor window—"a strange thing to one who, like you, has gone so little way along it. Where we are any of us going, I with my old eyes even cannot see."

She laughed a little. "Old? are your eyes old, Mr. Redfield? Somehow I know you are not old, and I fancy you never will be. How old are you now, Mr. Redfield? It shall be a profound secret."

"Ah, Miss Percival, that is a secret that a bachelor never tells,—at least not after he is forty."

"Now," said she, "you mean that I shall say you are but twenty-five. Tell me, Mr. Redfield, have you secrets? It must be delightful to have a secret—something really a secret, that no one else knows; which if they did know would make their hair stand on end; have you such a secret as that?"

Did she suspect him?—did she know that he had a secret?—and had he? He paused a moment and seemed grave:—how should he answer her?

"I fancy, Miss Percival, that most people have a secret they never tell:—not that *I* have—you must not assume that; but I believe there are strange things going on in every head or heart, which are not whispered on the house-tops."

"They tell them to their wives, do they not?" she asked archly.

"Perhaps they do; but do the wives tell their secrets to the husbands, do you think?"

"O," said Luly, impulsively, "I am sure I should. I could not keep a secret from a man I really loved, unless—unless he kept *his* secret back—"

"There it is—who knows? A transparent window in the breast would reveal curious things."

"Now, Mr. Redfield, do tell me a secret, a real secret. I should like to know one; pray tell me one."

He paused a moment:—was he about to tell her the hidden mystery and purpose of his life? Was there one to tell? He paused a moment—would he tell her?—What a thing it might be could he tell this fresh, sympathetic creature all he had to tell, and ask her to console and pity and love him? No, no, no; he could not.—What man can tell all?

"Miss Percival, I had a sister—"

She was all attention.

"I had a sister, an only sister, whom I loved as a young man, a very young man, might. She was older than I, and I believe better. She loved me too as sisters

do, and I believe, thought I should one day be a wonderful man—as I am not."

Luly made a little gesture of denial; it was crafty of him to disparage himself, for she volunteered his defense in her own heart. He saw it.

"Our lives were happy enough and uneventful, until a day came when a noble knight came riding along.—He saw the beautiful girl, who sat in the doorway singing little songs to herself, and he loved her—loved her as men sometimes do. Shall I tell the rest?"

"Do! Oh, do!"

"It is not a pleasant tale—not to me. He bowed his head to the beautiful woman, he dismounted and came to her and spoke to her; she rose and saluted him."

"Was she handsome?" asked Luly with a girl's interest and curiosity.

"Beautiful, so I thought; so he thought. He told her he was a knight riding through the world seeking adventures; that he was a son of chivalry, the soul of honor; that he lived but to relieve the distressed, to raise the fallen; cared nothing for himself, everything for her. Her heart was tender, it was touched; it felt the fascinations of a brave and generous man, it yielded to them. He asked for water and she gave him milk. He told her he loved her"—

"And did *she* love him?" asked Luly eagerly.

"She did—how could she help it? for she was young, and confiding, and faithful. She did love him and he found it out; found it out too soon, found it out when none other knew it"—

"*She* did not tell him!" exclaimed Luly.

"No, but he knew it; she believed he loved her, was sure of it. How I need not say, I do not know, but it was so. All was peace and happiness at that home; the sun shone brightly, the birds sang and the flowers perfumed the air. But a storm came, a dark, driving, dismal storm. It beat down flower and tree, and hushed the song of the bird; and when the storm passed, *they two were no longer there.*"

"They! who?" asked Luly with open eyes.

"The knight and the lady."

"No longer there!—Where—where were they?"

"They had disappeared."

"Disappeared! Where had they gone?"

"I do not know."

Luly *was* amazed. What did it mean? Was he telling her a fairy story? Yet he seemed to be in earnest. She looked at him—he seemed in earnest.

"Why, Mr. Redfield—what a strange story!"

"Most strange."

"It is a novel you have been telling me, and not a real story."

"It is true."

"Do you mean that you do not know what has become of your sister?"

"I mean to tell you that."

"That you have never seen her?"

"Never."

"And that you don't know whether she is dead or alive?"

"I do not know."

"Why, it is dreadful! It cannot be, it is impossible! Somebody must know!"

Luly's whole nature was stirred—it was so strange, so mysterious, so dreadful. It seemed to her there was something more to be told. He sat there pensive and silent, looking not at her, but vacantly through the window. He knew that she was moved and interested in the story, interested in him also—he knew it; but he was still and silent. He said nothing more.

"And this is your secret?" she asked.

"Yes."

"May I tell it?"

"No."

"But have you looked for her? Surely she was not lost—she had not been spirited away by Genii—have you looked for her?"

"Everywhere, in all quarters, everywhere."

"And you got no trace?"

"None."

"Why, it is the strangest thing I ever heard."

She mused on the story and he remained silent. She felt sorry for him—it was impossible that she should not; for it must have been a grievous thing; and the uncertainty now must be hard to bear.

"When did this happen?" she asked.

"Years ago,—I don't know how many."

"And her mother?"

"Dead."

"And her father?"

"Dead."

"And you only are alive?"

"Yes—unless she is alive. But I hope she is not."

"Hope she is not!" exclaimed Luly in dismay. "And why not?"

"Why should I wish it? If she is alive she is in misery or disgrace, or she would have let me know of her living and being. I believe she is dead, or—worse. But *that* I will not believe."

"Oh no, do not believe that. What a terrible thing to be alone in the world! *All alone*"—

Why had he told her this story? It certainly excited sympathy and pity; it moved her strangely toward him; it wakened in her new thoughts and feelings; it made her wonder how he could have lived so long under this cloud of doubt and desolation; it seemed impossible that he could ever be a gay man, or that he could take the same interest in life that she and others did. True, he rarely did laugh, almost never; but he was gentle and kind, and seemed pleased with the things of life; and that she thought impossible. At least it would be impossible for her.

Whatever may have been Redfield's purpose, he had succeeded in exciting the interest and the profound interest of Miss Percival. She thought of him now and wondered over his sad story; she lamented his desolation. Not that she proposed to herself to do anything, nothing at least more than to be kind to him, more careful than she would have been with an ordinary gay companion. She was not in love with him, not at all; it was quite another and a different feeling, and she enjoyed his society now more than before; she shared his secret, she knew what he knew and what no one else

did; and she found herself insensibly drawn to accept, if not to seek his society, whenever they two happened to meet.

And he, this lonely man, this man without home or friends, almost without human ties, what was his purpose? Was he merely amusing himself? playing on this delicate wind-harp with a rough and bitter blast, curious to see what sounds it would give forth? He did not act like a lover; was not urgent to see and to be with her, never wished to take her hand or touch her as lovers always do; was not sending her notes or books or flowers, as lovers do; was not planning parties where he might meet her; was not going to church that he might walk with her, as lovers do. No, he went on his quiet, silent, lonely way, making but little active attack. And yet he was strangely fascinating, was quietly potent, was silently influencing her thoughts and feelings, and indeed her whole life.

It is true he was often at Mr. Percival's house, and always in company with Mrs. Percival or Luly. He never *sought* Mr. Percival; not that he shunned him, but he seemed indifferent, listless,—to have no purpose in meeting him, no interest in knowing him better, no common ground of talk; there seemed no aversion, but there was no attraction.

And thus matters drifted.

XXXIX.

THIS BEGGAR'S CHILD!

But Mr. Edward Percival saw and heeded Mr. Redfield. He saw that he grew more and more in favor in his house, with all but himself; he saw that Luly liked his society, and was entertained if not interested, and perhaps deeply interested. He saw it with a profound sense of pain. Why—why should he be pierced with the sight of the inevitable? He knew, he was old enough to know, and he had never concealed it from himself, that she who had come to him so strangely, been ravished from him so mysteriously, was only left with him upon sufferance; that sooner or later this event he dreaded must come, and that sooner or later, Luly, the girl he had loved as his own, must and would leave him to cling to another. He knew that he must be again alone, and more alone than ever before.

He knew all this, and yet he shrank from this man; he would have drawn Luly away from him, would have said to her "touch not, taste not, handle not." There was an indefinable something about Mr. Redfield that Mr. Percival feared; and yet it was only an impression, and one of the vaguest. For Mr. Redfield was quiet and gentlemanly, he was not reproachable for his

ill courses, he was rich, he was sufficiently cultivated; no man who came to this house was more unexceptionable—more desirable indeed than he, as a husband for Luly; such would have been the vote of the world, such *was* Mr. Percival's opinion. Why then should she not love him and why not marry him, if he would marry her? Mr. Percival could not answer it:—and this was the reason why he dared not, never had dared to speak to Luly about him, or to caution her against him.

How should he meet her inquiries—"Why, Uncle, why not like him? What is there against him? Who is there of all we know better than he?" and so on. He had not one word or fact to urge; and he was wise enough to know that it was most dangerous to begin a battle without ammunition. She and he too might yet escape;—Luly was not a fool, and might have fifty other fancies before this one could crystallize. But if he now should rudely seize and shake the dish, this fancy might at once shoot into solid fact, and the damage then could never be remedied.

Redfield was always scrupulously polite and most deferential. Mr. Percival and he, from time to time, had brief conversations, but they were most general and useless; there was not the least meaning or purpose in them. But Mr. Percival failed to discover in them any clue to his aversion—an aversion which he felt, and perhaps encouraged; one which, as a man of honor, he was bound to march up to and examine; and if he found it only a scare-crow, he was bound to tear off its disguise and laugh it to scorn. But this he never did. He too drifted, as we all do, in the great current of life, and

did but little to steer his bark clear from rocks and shoals and whirlpools. It is so easy to drift, and so difficult to know where to steer, that most of us drift; and thus are but a kind of dead-wood, after all.

Edward Percival's life was growing shorter but not more perfected. The gray shadows of age were now creeping along:—not that he was old, but he was past the time of great expectation, past the days of dashing enterprise, past the hours when hope sat at the prow, pleasure at the helm:—he no longer looked forward into the bright future; but into the dead past his memory led him. And what was his life? A crime, a failure, a desolation.

You may say it was not a crime, because the deed was not done wickedly and with malice and intention; but it was a crime, because it was an act of selfishness intensified, perpetrated to the ruin of one, to the misery of all, and to the perpetual discomfiture of the man who had done it. He too could not escape; he could not atone for it, nor remedy it; and of what good was his penitence and remorse? None. The evil was done *and could not be undone.*

Had Edward Percival married Sarah Eustis, that simple and confiding country-girl, some might have laughed, some might have scorned. But he would have been an honest man, she would have been a living, happy woman; and Luly, who deserved it, would have been without suspicion or stain, as now she was not; for on her blessed and beautiful head rested the sins of her father, though she knew it not, and he knew it not.

Edward Percival had deserted Sarah Eustis, the sim-

ple country-girl, and had married Matilda Staunton, the elegant city beauty. And now? Harder and harder grew their lives, less and less their love and kindness, less and less their care and sympathy; more and more their suspicion and distrust, and coldness, and—hatred. It is a painful word to say, and yet had not hatred begun to creep into that house? Had not Matilda Staunton nourished and cherished her wrong? Had she not cause to believe that she had been defrauded of her love?—and by whom if not by Edward Percival, her husband, who had sworn to love her? *She* did not see, could not be made to see, the fatal selfishness which poisoned the sweet springs of her own soul; and so the poison went on spreading through her veins, until it watered the rank weeds of dislike and hatred; and so the weeds grew. Why did she not leave that home, why not fly to a convent, to somewhere, anywhere, rather than live on so?

Ah, it is easy to ask:—but consider that woman was designed by the Creator to live with man, to be a "help-meet" to him; that she is weak and dependent, that she is or ought to be a natural lover, that *her place* is in her home—in her husband's house; that once abandoning that or losing it she has no place or position in the world; and consider that Mrs. Grundy is very hard upon women who have no "place;" and then do not wonder that Mrs. Percival did not abandon Edward Percival's house, and that she did live on, hard and wretched though it was.

Luly now was their only bond of union; her they both loved—he passionately, she as she loved any one—

next to herself. Luly saved the house from being a stony palace of despair. Luly was yet gay, hopeful, loving, trusting; she felt at times the misery which seemed to pervade the atmosphere; but she had in her own good heart such a fountain of sunshine and life, that it stimulated her to shine out upon them her own superlative warmth and brightness.

Mr. Percival saw, or thought he saw, that Mrs. Percival was playing into the hands of Redfield, that she was willing to be a party to Redfield's plans if he had any, that she was quite willing to listen to the chit-chat of Templeton—which to him, with his formal and now severe temper, was but Sodom ashes—while Redfield could interest or perhaps win Luly away from him. Should he speak, should he act? What should, what could he do? He spoke.

"I do not understand, Mrs. Percival, the game that is being played in my house; pray tell me are you a party to it?"

Game! the word irritated her, naturally enough.

"I do not understand, Mr. Percival, what you are talking about. If there is any game being played *I* know nothing about it."

"Mrs. Percival—Matilda!—you are a woman and you cannot fail to have seen that Mr. Redfield is most assiduous in his attentions to Luly, most deferential and flattering; and you can hardly fail to know the danger that so young and trustful a girl as Luly may be in with such a man. I think you ought to check it; indeed to put a stop to it, before the matter goes further."

"Goes further? Before what goes further? You do

not suppose the man means to marry such a child as that? Why, Mr. Percival, your jealousy makes you see strange things."

Mr. Percival bit his lip and restrained his temper as well as he could. His wife's scornful rejection of his suggestions, her utter refusal to entertain them a moment, rasped along his nerves and irritated a temper, never perhaps very gentle, now all inflamed.

"I do not know what *he* intends, Mrs. Percival; I know what *I* intend;—and I intend that he shall not marry her—never, never! And I expect you, Mrs. Percival, to take steps to let him know it."

Mrs. Percival laughed, not as people do when they are pleased, but as they sometimes do when they are bitter and hateful;— "Why, Mr. Percival, if you wish to make yourself the laughing-stock of the town, I do not see as I can prevent it; but I may perhaps be allowed to say, that if you propose to tell Mr. Redfield that he *shall not* marry Luly before he asks it, you will make yourself such a laughing-stock; and Luly too, for that matter. And I may be allowed to say that you must get some one else to do your errand;—*I* cannot do it."

Mrs. Percival fanned herself,—for she too was inflamed. It was a thousand pities she could not have heard this suggestion of her husband's quietly and kindly, have answered it quietly and kindly, and so have got him and herself back into sweet and flowery paths—paths which indeed they ought never to have left. One bitter word is the parent of a thousand children, and they may be children of the devil too.

"Mrs. Percival," he said gravely, "do you refuse to obey this—to yield to this request of mine?"

"Why, Mr. Percival, I most certainly do. It is simply absurd and preposterous."

What now was he to do? Was he to curse and swear, and perhaps strike her? Most certainly not. Edward Percival was a gentleman in all these things, and he yet controlled his temper. He waited a few moments in silence. Mrs. Percival took up the word—

"You seem to forget, or to be strangely blind to the fact, that Miss Lucy is but a child yet, and that Mr. Redfield is a man. He is one of *my* friends, Mr. Percival, and while he amuses himself with Miss Lucy at times, it is me that he comes to the house to see;—pray try to divest yourself of foolish suspicions, and you will see how very absurd you are."

A man does not like to be called absurd, not by his wife and in cold blood;—nor does a woman enjoy it. Mrs. Percival's suggestion was well; but it was all spoiled by the word "absurd." Some judicious, kindly, hearty phrases might now have composed and arranged matters;—but no, they were not to be said.

"Mrs. Percival—Matilda—you may choose to say I am suspicious and absurd, but I do not accept your judgments;—they are now always harsh and unjust. I must be the judge in this matter, and must protect Lucy to the utmost of my power. I consider that there *is* danger in this man, and I require you to aid in averting it. I do not wish you to have such friends—they are not at all suitable to a *person of your age;*—you should see the impropriety of this thing, and you would if you

were not blinded by vanity and conceit. It surprises me and sometimes exasperates me, that you can spend your time with such men, and that you can expose Luly to their arts. You forget that they now look upon her as my heir, and therefore as a speculation; and knowing what you do of such men, I am surprised that you are so ready to receive them, and indeed to invite them here. I have a word more only to say,—that if this thing is not stopped, I may feel called upon to take Luly and leave the house."

There were exasperating things in this long speech:—"person of your age," that was most unkind and uncalled for. But the threat which closed it was bitter and insulting. Should she keep silent and allow the trouble to subside? She could not.

"Oh, Mr. Percival, you will of course do as you please, you are master here;—perhaps you will think it best and most manly to turn me into the street, or send me to the poor-house; then you can have it all as you like, you and this *beggar child* that *I* picked up out of the gutter! Pray, let me have the decision of my Lord when it is *perfectly* convenient!"

She swept out of the room. Edward Percival paced it, in grief and anger, for an hour.

XL.

AN OPPORTUNITY.

It was a fatal talk, and it made matters worse. Mrs. Percival was now less heedful of her husband's known wishes than ever, more careless, or defiant perhaps. She did not discourage the visits of Mr. Redfield, nor of Mr. Templeton. She liked them, they amused her; she considered Mr. Percival's suspicions absurd and his suggestions impracticable. So she lived on, and her friends came and went as before.

Nor did Mr. Percival *act* as he had talked. He did not go to them and forbid them the house, nor could he bring himself to tell his suspicions, absurd and preposterous as Mrs. Percival called them, to Luly. He could not bear to wake up in her soul such wretched thoughts and fears as now found a resting-place in his. He took every opportunity to be with her, now more than ever; he made appointments with her and for her, and for a while he engrossed much of her time. But it could not always be so. She must be with Mrs. Percival, it was impossible she should not be; and she must fall in with the ways of the world in which she lived; and so her life was divided between the two, little know-

ing or suspecting the bitter words that had been shot backward and forward over her innocent head.

Mrs. Percival was mistaken—and she was surprised also.

As she sat alone one evening in her parlor,—for Mr. Percival and Luly had gone for a walk, or to see some pictures, or to buy something,—Mr. Redfield came in.

"What, all alone?" he said. "Then I hope I shall not be unwelcome."

"No, why should you?" she replied in her pleasantest way,—"Good men are not so plenty as to be driven out here, as the money-changers were. And let me say, Mr. Redfield, how fortunate I consider you, that you are not obliged to be digging and hunting for money all the time. Seeking day after day and year after year for money, until it gets to engross the soul. Don't you think, Mr. Redfield, that money is very debasing? Now with you, you have your time at your own command, and can spend it upon your mind. Oh, there's nothing I admire more than intellect."

Mrs. Percival was prone to indulge in this style of conversation with a certain kind of people who, she believed, had some intellectual cultivation. It is true that Mrs. Percival had but little, but she had a perception that it was a good thing to have, or at least it was a good thing to talk about. Redfield understood her perfectly and was willing to go along with her, and did so for a while. But the topic fell to silence;—then he said to her in a low voice,

"But I *am* hunting, Mrs. Percival"—

"Well, what is it?" She was curious.

"I am seeking one to love—one to love me"—

She was startled,—was he about to make love to *her?* She drew up her skirt a little. But he did not take her hand, nor fall on his knees, nor do anything dreadful, as men are supposed to do in such cases. It was not Mrs. Percival he loved.

"I have found one to love, but have I found one to love me?—that is the question I cannot answer."

What was she to say or do? She spoke out in an unsentimental way, for she wished no nonsense.

"Well, I can fancy a tall, black-eyed houri, with pots of money in her own right, as the one that the much sought Mr. Albert Redfield has at last settled upon. Never fear; handsome men, and intellectual men, and moneyed men are not so plenty. Propose without delay—*I* do not doubt the result." She spoke lightly and in a tone of persiflage. But Redfield sat quietly, listening.

"I am not sure of it"—he said. "I wish I were. *You* can help me."

"I?"

"Yes—you can help me. You can at least give me an *opportunity*—I must trust Heaven and my own courage then."

"Well, what is it?"—she said, looking at him.

"It is Miss Lucy that I would love—"

Mrs. Percival made a gesture—

"Oh, heavens! Why, Mr. Redfield, she is but a child?"

"She is old enough to be the loveliest and most ad-

mired young woman in the city; and as such, the most sought for, the most difficult to win:—beauty, family, money, all are combined, how then can I hope to win? And yet I do; I do not despair, Mrs. Percival, with your good help."

She was surprised, astonished. The thing that Edward Percival had dreaded was then to come to pass. What an impossible thing it seemed, that this man, a man of the world though yet young, should wish to marry this child that she had saved from the street? It seemed impossible. But then she thought, why should he not? Nothing could be urged against it—nothing but Mr. Percival's absurd fancy. He would get over that, of course, if Luly only were once in love; whatever *she* wished would be law. And then why not have Luly well married and out of the way, why not? All this and more had once floated among the vague might-be's, and now it passed swiftly through her woman's brain as possible;—but she had yet something to say. A strange desire seized her to make these men wince; a strange sort of perversity came over her, to let Edward Percival feel that she was master of the situation, not he. Why should she heed his whims and wishes? Was not Luly her child more than his? and if she approved of Mr. Redfield, why should she care for Edward Percival's disapproval? She was in a mischievous state of mind.

"You know, perhaps, who Miss Lucy is, Mr. Redfield?"

"I know that she is your niece and one of the loveliest girls in the world, and that is enough."

"Mr. Redfield—she is a beggar, and has not a drop of my blood or of Mr. Percival's in her veins!"

Mr. Redfield was not to be put off. "You surprise me. But that has nothing to do with it, Mrs. Percival."

"She is not only a beggar, but an Irish beggar at that"—

"It does not matter"— he said, looking steadily at her, surprised certainly.

"You may fancy, Mr. Redfield, that Miss Lucy is an heiress; it is proper for you to know that she has no kind of claim upon Mr. Percival or me; Mr. Percival is fond of her, very fond, and so am I; but it does not follow that she will inherit one cent."

"It does not matter, Mrs. Percival; I believe I have enough for both."—He was certainly surprised; perhaps she was saying these things to oppose him, and because she wished to drive him off. He was not to be put off. —"Perhaps, Mrs. Percival, I have been mistaken. I have been foolish enough to believe that *you* would not oppose me, that in you I should find a friend. Am I mistaken?"

Was he then so bent upon getting her? Well, thought Mrs. Percival, he may know the worst.

"No—no;—*I* am not opposed. I don't see why I should be opposed. You do Miss Lucy a great honor certainly; you with your face and fortune, and cultivation, and position, if you are willing to take a beggar-child without fortune or anything that men value except beauty, it certainly does you great honor; and it is a great honor to Miss Lucy surely:—she must feel it so, as I certainly do. But, Mr. Redfield, there is one

thing further I think it proper to say, before you commit yourself"—

He was all attention—"What may it be, Mrs. Percival?"

"You must expect the opposition, if not the hostility of Mr. Percival"—

Mr. Redfield started, he looked earnestly at her. "Why? Mrs. Percival, may I ask why this hostility should exist? I am not aware that anything I have done"—

"Oh—no, no, Mr. Redfield; but you men are all so whimsical, have such strange fancies; we never know where to find you. But it is not that; Mr. Percival is so infatuated with Lucy, that I believe he would put any man to death who persisted in marrying her. It is absurd, I know; I know you must think so; of course it is, but no matter; if he feels so, I don't see how you are to succeed."

A significant but faint smile just moved over his mouth; but what it was significant of, Mrs. Percival could not know. Perhaps it meant that Mr. Redfield knew also what would bring loving fathers or uncles to terms and soften their opposition. He made a deprecatory gesture—

"Mrs. Percival, only give me the opportunity; I only ask the opportunity to press my suit with Miss Lucy. If I can win *her*, I shall not fear the rest."

"Opportunity? What more do you want than you have?"

"Ah, Mrs. Percival, your woman's heart will tell you, that if I could see Miss Lucy now and then *alone;* if I

could see her in the quiet shades of the country, when her heart was not distracted with the excitements that surround her here; if I could have but the opportunity of proving my love in the thousand little ways which come to us on the lakes, and in the groves, and even in the quiet road-sides, I am sure I should have more courage—should have better hope of success. I only ask for such opportunity. And then, when all the surrounding influences predispose the heart to tenderness, I should have great hope, great hope that I might by and by succeed. Give me only an opportunity.—And I pray that at present nothing, not a word may be said to Mr. Percival; I would not wake his opposition into activity. Once I can storm the citadel of dear Miss Lucy's heart, I shall not fear the rest:—if once she is committed to me, all will be easy."

Mrs. Percival shook her head, but it ended in her agreeing to his proposal, and in her consenting to give him such opportunity as he desired; how and when will appear hereafter.

XLI.

S. E. E. P.

Mrs. Percival thought over the matter with a certain sense of satisfaction,—why should she not? Here was a man whom half the town would jump to marry, ready and willing, possessed with a desire to love and marry Luly; not unsight, unseen, but with a full knowledge of all the damaging facts; ready to take her, knowing that she was a beggar and penniless; to take her as his wife, and put her in a position as his wife equal to the best; for he certainly had money, and character, and good manners. And what an absurd thing was Mr. Percival's opposition, a mere whim; she did right to pay no heed to it. He would one day find it so. And why should he assume to direct in Luly's affairs? Was she not more entitled to do so than he? There could be no doubt of it. She would certainly exercise her right. He had now no claim upon her for confidence or even courtesy;—he must take the consequences of his own harsh and cruel nature. Like a man, he wished to engross the love of Luly; no doubt, would have been glad to draw it away even from her; but at any rate he would not consent that she should love another; and yet she *must* love another, it was in the nature of things. Now

there was not one chance in a thousand that Luly ever would have such an offer as this—there was not the least trace of objection, except in the mind of a wilful man. She would pay no heed to it,—of course she would not. What she was doing was for Luly's good, and that she was bound—yes, bound to consider, and not the whims of Mr. Percival, who, in a selfish way, only cared to keep Luly for himself.

"Men are so selfish!" that was her thought. And then it would be best now for Luly to be out of the way; she divided rather than united the house. Hard as her own life was, and bitter as her disappointment was, and cruelly as she felt she had been sacrificed, she also felt that she would now be freer, more mistress of herself, without the restraints of Luly's presence. There must be much concealment before her, and it was most irksome. Beside, there was a hope, a mere possibility—yet lingering, almost lost, in her heart—that the love of Edward Percival might be lured back. Why abandon that hope?—Why abandon any hope? If Luly were once away, that possibility might grow into strength. It is impossible to follow the secret windings of a woman's heart, but enough is shown to indicate the workings of Mrs. Percival's.

Mr. Percival and Luly pursued their walk through the streets all unconscious of the little plot that was brewing under their roof. They walked on, she hanging on his arm, he now and then taking her soft warm hand in his tenderly,—there was full confidence between

these two; and neither ever spoke of Mrs. Percival except with kindness and care; for while Luly knew that there was trouble, she loved both so well, was so grateful to both, that she could not bear to know more of anything so painful. When together, all were kind and polite; when separated from Mrs. Percival they were guarded.

They walked on unconscious, and happy in one another. Was Luly dreaming of Mr. Redfield? Was she by a hidden sense receiving an inspiration in her pure soul, that a little drive was being projected in the mind of the man who loved her, which was to bring to her great happiness—or misery? Was she feeling in her inmost heart an influx of that happiness, which a loving soul may sometimes pour out, so that it pervades the very air, and is breathed in by her he loves? Doubtful; there were no signs of it, none at least that Mr. Percival felt. She seemed preoccupied and engrossed about the color of a pair of gloves rather, and was a little fearful that she had got them of too light a lavender; but then they were a present from her dear uncle, and she meant to like them. No, she was not thinking of Mr. Redfield, not just then. She had thought of him, and did think of him, and if Mr. Percival had asked her, she would most certainly have blushed all over her smooth white forehead; such a little fool she would have been, or would have thought herself. She liked Mr. Redfield, of course she did; but did she love him? She did not know it.

Mr. Percival did not ask her what she thought of Mr. Redfield. He had never dared to do it. He shunned

him as a forbidden subject; for he could not put into shape his aversion, and he knew it;—he knew if he attempted it, he would or might make matters much, much worse. At any rate he was not thinking of him now; he was enjoying the pleasure of Luly, and in her sunshine he found warmth. Was he dreaming of his wife, of the handsome Matilda Staunton? And did he care a straw for her beauty now? Was he dreaming of her as she sat beside Redfield, making their little plots for Luly's future, for her happiness, without regard to him,—in flagrant disregard of his wishes, indeed with contempt for his whims? None of this flowed over into the universal air, to penetrate his consciousness. If there are adverse or malignant spirits filling the air, blessed be the man whose soul cannot perceive them. Happy was Mr. Percival, that this night none of them whispered to him of his wife and Mr. Redfield.

They walked home together, these two in happy unconsciousness, in blissful ignorance of all harm. When they entered the hall it was not yet ten o'clock, and as Luly was about to enter the parlor in which was burning but a dim light, she was arrested by a voice that she knew; it was Redfield's. She hesitated, not from any fear, but from a natural timidity, which told her that perhaps she might break in upon a conversation in which she could not take a part. So she stood for a moment in the door-way.

Mr. Percival heard that voice, and though it was soft and pleasant, it struck him like a blast of chilling wind. It was weeks now since he had heard it, and it had partly faded from his thoughts; possibly he had

hoped that his words to Mrs. Percival had had their due effect. But now it all came back again with all the old influences, whatever they were. He stood still, and did not move.

Mrs. Percival spoke—

"Lucy, my child, come in, come in; what made you so long? Here has been Mr. Redfield waiting to see you, and until he came I was quite alone, quite"—

"O," said Luly, entering, "I am so glad he came; so glad, Mr. Redfield, you came to console or rather to entertain my aunt, as you always do. I am such a poor stupid talker that she gets quite tired of me; and I am sure I do myself."

This called out some compliment from Mr. Redfield, in the midst of which Mr. Percival stole away to his own room upstairs. The next half hour was spent by him in great distress; for it was plain that Mrs. Percival was wholly regardless of his wishes, and defied him:—indeed, his jaundiced soul began to entertain not angels, but evil spirits, and he feared or suspected that she might do more than oppose; that she might even work against him.

He paced the floor, he was violently excited; the thought he once had had came back upon him with force,—"why not take Luly and fly? Why not tear himself and her away from all this which now blasted his life, and which he feared might blight hers?" To go somewhere, anywhere, might be a relief, might be better than this torture. But he forgot, as men all do, that he must carry his shadow with him wherever he might go.

It was not until Luly came lightly into his room that the evil spirit fled. She had been to her room, where her walking garb was removed, and she was now fresh and radiant; for her walk had stimulated her and her little talk in the parlor had excited her, and she came in now to say a few pleasant words, as she often did before she went to her own room. When she ran up stairs to put aside her hat and gloves, she had made herself pretty before going down again, and had put on some little ornament which happened to come to her hand:—curious it is how things do happen; strange that this chain should have been in sight this night, one which perhaps she had not worn ten times in her life;—strange that she should have twisted it into a bracelet and put it around her arm with its little locket in plain sight. But she had done so.

Mr. Percival sat by his table leaning his heavy head on his hand. Luly came and put her hand around his shoulder and kissed his care-worn forehead.

"Ah, my uncle, I cannot have this; I fancied you reading a nice book and enjoying somebody's good mind, and here you are with a wrinkle as plain as a horseshoe right in the middle of your forehead:—there, now I have kissed it away;—there, I can't have that any more."

He looked up at her pleasant, radiant face, and the wrinkles vanished; the whole face of the world was changed by her sunlight.

"Now you look handsome again, as you ought to. If you are not more careful, uncle, if you do not keep a smooth forehead, you may bring upon yourself a visita-

tion:—you may find, uncle, that I will never, never leave you. Think of that!"

He put his arm around her supple waist and drew her to him,—"Ah, my Luly, that is just what I most fear"—

"What," she said laughingly,—"fear that I shall always be with you? Why, what a terrible old uncle you are getting to be!" She knew better than this of course.

But what is it? What is it that stops the current of the blood in its full flow? What is it that pales the face—that fascinates the eye—that palsies the tongue—that unnerves the hand? Has he a fit? Have these years of doubt and misery shaken his nerves to their very centre? Has the "stroke" of death come?

Luly is startled, for she feels the shock vibrating through her hand and arm even to her very heart:—"What is it? Oh, what—what is it?"

He has seen a sight, a sight which his eyes have not looked upon now these eighteen years; a sight which floods and overwhelms him with the black waters of the dread past; a sight which tells a tale of shame, but which may tell—what may it not tell? A strange thrill goes coursing through his veins as the pent-up blood again rushes forth. What is it?

He has seen that locket—has seen the locket which contains those letters, *S. E. E. P.*—Sarah Eustis Edward Percival!

"God, have mercy!" he murmurs—

"Oh, uncle, you are sick!—what shall I do? Let me call for help!"—

"Oh, my child, my child!" he gasps. He holds her fast—will not let her go;—he hurts her arm with his passionate grasp—

"Oh, uncle!" She is frightened.

"No, no, no, my child. It is all over now—kiss me, kiss me, and go:—Say nothing!" He made a gesture with his hands.

XLII.

MISTRESS MULLOY CONFESSES!

He slept not that night;—he burned with a fever of impatience. Oh that day would come, that he might resolve these doubts!

Who was she, this child that has so grown into his heart? Was she indeed the child of Sarah Eustis? Was she the child of Edward Percival? And how came she here—here in the house of Edward Percival? She, the child of a poor unknown Irish woman, how came she wearing the chain that had once been his gift to Sarah Eustis?—his pledge to the only woman he had ever truly loved? What was this mystery? What meant this darkness of Egypt through which he had been walking all these years, with this child by his side? And how was this darkness about to be dissipated? What sun was about to pierce it? What revelation was about to be vouchsafed from the great source of light and truth?

These, and a thousand other things went whirling through his excited brain. The night wore away, and morning broke upon an eventful day. He heard the cries of the milkman, the rattling of carts, the sounds of

life, and wished the lagging sun would hasten upward on his course. He was silent, full of thoughts; he said little to his wife, few words to Luly in answer to her anxious inquiries;—he ate what little he could eat, in silence. He could say nothing of his hopes or fears to Mrs. Percival, nothing to Luly:—for what might they be, but the baseless fabric of a dream?

Mrs. Percival was busy too, with her secret thoughts. She was thinking of a pleasant little excursion; of a delightful drive with pleasant companions, through this beautiful May country, and she was charmed that the sun was so bright, though his rays promised to be so generous. And then she anticipated the gay sights of the race-ground; the gay ladies, the chatty gentlemen, the busy buzzing throng which she had not seen now for many years. She remembered with a little bitterness, that Mr. Percival had never taken her to them, that, in fact, he had somehow disapproved. But he was so cold and indifferent to all *she* wished, it was easy to see it; she felt it all. Of course she could not and would not tell him of her little plan for pleasure, of course not. Nor would she tell Luly until the time came; for why wake up an opposition from Mr. Percival which would be simply absurd, if not worse?

There was another little secret, not to be told, not by her at least. Let Mr. Redfield tell it and in his own way. But what a surprise for Lucy,—or would it be a surprise? Perhaps not, perhaps she already divined the secret which it is not easy to conceal from the subtle sense of a girl. If she did know it, did anticipate it, would not she, Mrs. Percival, be overwhelmed with her

gratitude and delightful happiness? For there could be but one end to it all.

Luly, too, had her own little thoughts, but they were not much. She wondered how any one could be so strangely moved as her uncle had been, when he did not seem to be sick at all, and when only an hour before he had been so occupied with her in choosing those gloves; —she feared they were a little too light a lavender—

They sat at the breakfast—

"Mrs. Percival," said her husband slowly, "will you tell me how I shall find your friend Mrs. Mulloy?"

"Why, Mr. Percival, what's to be done now, I beg to know?"

"I only wish to have her address, as I wish to make an inquiry of her."

"Would it not be well to let me do it for you?"

"Why, uncle, you have been there"—broke in Luly —"down in Avenue A, you remember?"

"Yes, I know that much; but I fancied she might have made twenty removals. Do you know if it is so?"

"No, Mr. Percival, I do not; I take very little interest in her or her affairs. You or Luly ought to know, if any one."

He turned to Luly—

"No, uncle, I am sorry to say I do not. I have not seen her since the winter. It is really too bad, that I neglect her as I do, the good old soul. She does love me, and so do I love her."

"My dear," interrupted Mrs. Percival, "do not speak so strongly about such people."

"But I do, aunty—not as I love you and uncle, of

course, but she has been so good and kind, and loves me so; I really believe just as well as she does her own children."

"Yes, my dear, that is all very well for her to love you—it is very proper; but *you*, you should not speak about such people so strongly—it is not at all the thing."

"Shall I go, uncle, and look for her?" Luly asked.

He shook his head, for it was not in her company he wished to see Mrs. Mulloy. But Mrs. Percival decided that to-day no such thing should be done. Luly was wanted on another errand.

"My child," she said, "you strangely forget. We can never allow such a thing. You forget that what has happened once may happen again. So, my dear, say no more. Your uncle will no doubt find Mrs. Mulloy, if he needs to see her. But to-morrow, Mr. Percival, I may be at leisure; why not intrust your message to me?"

He made no reply, but slowly rose from the table, in an abstracted way, and walked out of the room. Luly ran after him—

"Why, uncle, am I to have no kiss unless I beg for it?"

He kissed her forehead and lips with trembling eagerness, which Mrs. Percival could not fail to note. Then he walked rapidly away; he wanted no carriage, no witnesses to-day. He made his way through the streets that lead toward Avenue A, and was not long in finding himself among the thronged tenements which crowd that district. But he was perplexed; it was not

easy for him to find the spot where Mrs. Mulloy had once lived; he walked up and down, and past it many times, before he was able to decide upon an alley-way which seemed the true one, and he spent the morning in his hunt. It seemed useless to inquire, for such people have no history, and make no mark upon the floating stream of human life, which flows on forever in a great city. He asked at last of policemen:—no, they knew of no such person. But his search was not in vain, though it was past noon when he at last found his true way. Up the dirty stairs he went, and his knock at the door brought out Mrs. Mulloy's cheery voice—

"Come in, wid ye."

Supposing it some neighbor like herself, she was surprised at the appearance of a gentleman, and for a moment was confused; but with ready civility she brushed off a chair with her apron, and pushed it toward him.

"God bless ye, be seated:—and what is it yer honor wants with the poor widdy-woman, and siven poor childer pulling at her, the day?"

Mistress Mulloy thought of tax-gatherers or rent-collectors, when she saw so well-dressed a man entering her door, and took measures to protect herself against all possible demands.

"Ah," said Mr. Percival, slightly disconcerted—"and is poor Juke dead indeed? Why, Luly will be shocked."

"O, dear, dear—Mister Percival, is it yer honor indeed? What ould eyes mine are getting to be, not to know yer blessed face. The Juke is well, beggin' yer pardin; but there is such a throng of these beggars, tryin' to wheedle

a poor woman's little money out of her very mouth, that I thought ye was one of 'em. Thank God, it's yer blessed self, come to tell me about the darlin'; an' how is she? An' is she blooming like a red rosebud, an' smelling as sweet as the djew that falls down on it in the mornin' to make it fit for her own purty nose to smell of? An' how is the child? Sure she must be well with your own noble self to see afther her?"

Such flatteries as Mistress Mulloy's hurt no one. There was not a particle of self in them, only a desire to put one in honest conceit with one's-self.

Mr. Percival went direct to his purpose in a stupid way. "It was about Miss Lucy that I wanted to see you, Mrs. Mulloy"—

"Well, an' what?" She was a little on her guard at his formal method.

"You told me, I think, that she was the—the child of some relative of yours?"

"Rellytiv'—is it?"

"Yes, some cousin or something of that sort from over the sea"—

"An' far enough over the sea it was, poor thing, and I never to see her alive the blessed day"— Misthress Mulloy brushed away a tear.

Mr. Percival was perplexed. He was such a simpleton, that he fancied Mrs. Mulloy was going to tell him quite another story at once, and because *he* needed another story. That was not the Misthress's way.

"Hum—then you are quite sure the child was born in Ireland—eh?"

"Not the laste bit. How can I be sure where she

was born and I not at the borning?—how can I be sure o' that? I'll not tell yer honor a lie about *that*, this blessed morning of St. Marg'rit."

Mrs. Mulloy was master of fence, and she was using it; for how could she know what he was after, until she found it out?

"But if she was from Ireland, and brought the child with her, then it would be reasonable to suppose she was born in Ireland, would it not?" asked he.

"An' who has tould yer honor it was on-reasonable? Somebody's been filling yer blessed soul with lies I'm thinking, that ye should be draggin' the questions out of the old woman this morning, about the child. Is it that ye want to be rid of her—is that it? Because Misthress Mulloy, who saved the darlin' once, will save her agin. Let me know where she is, and I'll come for her: there's room enough here for the like of her, bless her heart!" She waved her strong arm around the room,—you would have thought it as wide as the prairie.

"No, no, no,"— exclaimed Mr. Percival hastily— "you quite misapprehend me, totally. Never, never shall the dear child leave me; while I have a roof over me, it is hers; while I have a penny to spend, it is hers; while I have a heart to beat, it will beat for her. No, Mrs. Mulloy, do not mistake;—she is the solace of my life, the pride of my eye, and thanks be to you for saving her for me. But something has happened, a very strange thing—a locket"—

Mrs. Mulloy was reassured, but was still fearful.

"It's her own, I say it belongs to her; does any-

body say it's not hers? Let me face the vagabones, let me tell them the truth to their faces!"

"Now, Mrs. Mulloy, will you tell me how she came by it—a locket with a chain attached?"—

"And of goold?"

"Yes."

"An' with letters on it?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. I know, it yer honor. It belongs to her own blessed self, there's no lie about it; an' I'll lay my hand on the sacrament and swear it."

"Yes, yes—but how did she come by it?"

"How did she come by it?—She come honestly by it, and that's no lie. She's no thief, and Misthress Mulloy's no thief of the world! An' ye can tell 'em that!"

Was he ever to discover what he wished to know?

"But, Mrs. Mulloy, nobody accuses her or you of being a thief. I only am anxious to learn who gave it to her, how she got it."

"Got it, is it? She *had* it; she had it forever as I believe."

"But how could she have had it, if nobody gave it to her?"

"Couldn't her blessed mother have had it before her, and if she was taken away to heaven by the blessed angils, who should have the goold but the babby? Will ye ask 'em that?"

Mrs. Mulloy was still carrying on secret war with some impalpable enemy, and did not mean to be beaten.

"Then it *was* her mother's before her?"

"There's no lie in that"—

"Now, Mrs. Mulloy, did not her mother die in the police station in ——— street?"

"How can I say that, when I never saw her die?"

"But did not you see the child then for the first time, and was not the mother dead at that time? You need not fear me, Mrs. Mulloy, I am only asking for Luly's good:—do not fear me."

She looked at him for a moment—

"I did, and it's no lie I'm telling you this time."

"And this locket and chain were found on the mother then?"

"I'm not denyin' it."

"And this then was your cousin, only because your great heart makes any poor creature in distress your cousin—eh?"

"It may be as your honor says. I'll not deny your words"—

He rose and took her hand:—

"Mrs. Mulloy, it is now all clear to me; and you I have to thank for giving me an opportunity of doing a simple act of justice, which may help to atone for the sin of my life:—*Luly is my own child*, and this day I will publish it to all the world."

He left the room hastily, and left Mrs. Mulloy standing dumb with amazement.

XLIII.

THE WIND AND THE WHIRLWIND.

"Put on your things," said Mrs. Percival to Luly, "this fine May morning, and we will have the carriage up and take a drive. I would like to see Mrs. Mulloy for one thing, and whatever else we can do we will do; so get ready."

Luly was quite willing, only too glad to have some out-of-door life this beautiful warm day:—she ran up stairs, singing to herself like a free-hearted creature as she was. She decided not to wear the new lavender gloves, not in the morning, and so laid them aside. Before she was ready Mrs. Percival sent up for her to come down to her room a moment. She hastened to meet her aunt.

"Luly, here is Mr. Redfield, who says he will be back in half an hour to drive us over to the races. It is such a charming day, that I told him we would go with the greatest pleasure in life; all you need to do is to take an extra shawl, and make yourself look pretty; for everybody will be there. It will be a beautiful spectacle, and we shall enjoy the drive and all greatly."

Luly was delighted with the project; for she had never seen a race and she wondered what it was like;

and then to go driving through the green country in such a glorious day, it made the blood flow in her veins. She only hesitated a moment—

"But uncle?—will he go, aunty?"

"O no; Mr. Percival is down among his ledgers and ships; he could not be hired to go."

"But you think he would like to have us go?"

"Of course he would; whatever will please you, Luly, and—me, he is sure to like. And we shall be home again before he is; so run up and get ready, for they will be here before we know it."

There was a lingering doubt in Luly's mind. She had never heard her uncle say a word about the races, and yet—but what harm could there possibly be in going with her aunt and Mr. Redfield? But she thought who are "they"?—"*they* will be here"—who are they?

This time she decided she would wear the new lavender gloves, they were so pretty; and she would like to look pretty if all the rest did. But Luly did not spend much time over herself, for she was pretty without much elaborating, and that she had learned to know.

She heard the bell ring and the doors open, and then she heard free pleasure-seeking voices; and she ran down flushed with expectation—to find Mr. Redfield and Mr. Templeton ready to welcome her. The carriage was at the door, and there also stood Mr. Redfield's neat, tasteful phaeton, with his fine horses shining like the dawn.

"Now, Mrs. Percival, we must take my wagon"—he said—"it is lightest and best in every way. Your carriage is all very well for the pavement, but on the road

mine is best; pray send it away. I shall drive and you will sit by me, and see how well I can do it. So let it be agreed."—

It was agreed to, though Luly had a slight sense of disappointment, at the prospect of sitting behind with Mr. Templeton; not that he was not a most agreeable companion, but somehow she had supposed that she was to listen to the more earnest voice of Mr. Redfield. But who would be carping on such a morning?

"You must wait a few moments," said Mrs. Percival, "while I get together some lunch; it won't take five minutes"—

"But we have got it, in the wagon, already"—said Templeton; "a regular bachelor lunch."

"That will never do," said Mrs. Percival gayly—"to allow you men to suppose you can prepare your own food, and more than that, to prepare anything fit for *us* to eat—you must see that it is rank heresy. No, you must wait for me." She left them a few moments.

Redfield said little, but Templeton was in gay spirits. The prospect of a charming drive, seated beside one of the prettiest girls, with Redfield on the seat to pay the bills, was a touch of paradise.

Luly looked at Mr. Redfield; he seemed preoccupied; but, seeing her eyes fixed upon him inquiringly, he threw off his indifference and came close to her; a smile flitted over his pale face—

"I would fain believe that this little trip is agreeable to Miss Percival?"

"Charming, what can be more delightful? For you must know, Mr. Redfield, I have never seen a race in

my life, and as it is a little wicked—is it not?—I expect to enjoy it greatly." Gay and pleased herself, she was anxious to rally him out of any despondency or introspection to which he might have yielded. She succeeded.

"If it be wicked—and I would not admit that—the angels with us will bless it. We shall, I am sure, purify our part of the field."

They mounted, and Mrs. Percival took her seat beside Redfield, who held the reins. The groom sat behind, and so low down as not to be a part of the party.

Pleasant, meaningless things were said on all hands, as they rattled over the pavements, crossed the ferry, and bowled along the soft Jersey roads to the Course.

The effect of a Race-Course may be bad upon a community—I am inclined to that opinion—but it is certainly attractive: because it is out of doors, and that is exhilarating; it is in a lovely country, and that is pleasant; it is thronged with a crowd of people bent upon being happy, and that magnetizes everybody; the horses are full of life and spirit, and that gives us life and spirit;—altogether, if the devil and his imps would keep away, it would be a charming spot.

Luly was magnetized, she enjoyed it all; she was captivated with the horses—lithe, graceful, spirited things, she longed to pat them, and tell them how she admired them. She was charmed to see so many pleasant people. She heard pleasant things on every side; she said pleasant things, and thought pleasant things. They sat in their phaeton and received all the pleasant people that came to them; occasionally they

stepped on to the grass to greet some one; the lunch was appetizing, and Luly confessed, even Mrs. Percival admitted, that the bachelor part of it was delicious. Luly could not propose to leave the scene, it was so fascinating—she must see the last race, and there were to be three that day. But the days were long, why not see it?

As Mrs. Percival and Redfield were stepping back to their wagon before the last race, he said—

"You will try to secure me an opportunity?"

"Yes, but how—how can I manage it?"

"I *must* say a few words to her.—Can you not take Templeton and ride down to the hotel with the Colgates?—they have plenty of room."

"Let us try." She stepped to the Colgates' carriage; good-hearted, stupid, kind people they were. They were but too glad to oblige.

"Mr. Templeton," said Mrs. Percival, as they returned to the phaeton, "you must come with me. I am going to the hotel with the Colgates—I am *so* tired I cannot stay longer. Leave these young people to see it out. I must get a rest before we start for home."

"Oh, aunt, let us all go!" cried Luly—"I care nothing about the race."

"Nonsense, my child!—See it out now you are here, for you may never come again. You will call for me at the hotel, Mr. Redfield? Good-bye for an hour;—don't hurry, for I shall lie down to rest."

Away she and Templeton went to find a seat with the Colgates, to go down with them to the village.—Luly and Mr. Redfield remained. She sat on the

wagon while he stood behind it. He was somehow not in his best mood.

"I fear," said Luly, "that I am but a bore. Young people are so foolish. You must try to bear it, Mr. Redfield; but indeed I was ready to go,—and I am sorry aunt did not take me."

He laid his hand on the lavender glove, tenderly, affectionately:—"Never whisper such a thing; I am but too proud and too happy to be with you. The day, the scene, all are charming; let us enjoy them to the full."

The trumpet sounded "to saddle," and the horses came up stepping daintily.

"Do get in," said Luly; "I am sure, Mr. Redfield, you cannot see, standing there."

He got in and stood beside her.

"Look, look! What a beautiful creature the black is! What a graceful creature!"

"Yes, but he will be beaten."

"Never," said Luly,—"it is not possible: he is too handsome."

"Handsome people never win," was Redfield's laconic reply.

"He must win, he can and shall win. I must bet on him, and blow him a kiss."

"Gloves, that he loses!"—

"Gloves, that he wins!"—

So these two gay people went on.

In the first heat the black won:—

"Ha ha!" laughed Luly—"you see!"

"Gloves, that he loses!"—said Redfield.

"Gloves, that he wins!"—cried she.

In the second heat he lost, in the third he was distanced.

"You have won," said Luly.

He looked down at her, and said,

"Let it be an omen,—that I shall always win."

She did not suspect him—not at all. She only said, "That is not given to man:—to win and to lose, to lose and to win, that seems the way. But you are spoiled, Mr. Redfield; you have had so much success that you demand and expect success. I fear you too are spoiled. My book says—'He who feeds on success is sure to burst'—so be very careful." She laughed.

"Once more," he replied; "once more is all I ask. Then I am ready for a convent."

"What a delicious Father Confessor you will become, eh?"

They were trying to get out of the crowd of carriages, and were delayed, and in some danger. Once they collided, and Luly seized his arm in terror.

"Be careful, Mack!" said he sternly to the driver. "Turn here and go out the back way." To Luly, "We will go a mile or two round, so as to escape all this dust and danger."

They drove on through the bosky roads, and in the quiet lanes. The repose was complete; and all the more soothing and delicious that it contrasted so with the bustle and excitement of the day. Luly sat back in the seat and yielded herself to the charm. She did not dream of danger, nor did she note the black thunder clouds that were rising in the west. They drove

on, mostly in silence, each busy with thoughts or sensations—but how different! His opportunity had come, how would he use it? Was he thinking of Luly or of Edward Percival? Of Edward Percival surely. Did he hate him? He did. And this man then was Tom Eustis? None other than he; and now he was bending his bow to shoot a poisoned arrow, through this girl, straight to the heart of the man she loved—he hated.

Has he no pity? no love for this girl who sits by his side, so charming in her innocence and youth? None. Pah! he derides it. Had Edward Percival any pity for Sarah Eustis, once as young and innocent as this girl he has picked up to comfort him in his declining years? None. He has sown the Wind, let him reap the Whirlwind!

They rode slowly on; the clouds deepened and blackened, but the sun still shone and all was peace.

"How delicious," murmured Luly half in reverie; "one might ride so forever."

He looked at her—he whispered to her—"And why not ride so forever? What more delicious, more fascinating?"

She did not answer, nor look at him. The sun was obscured, and the black clouds were rising over their heads—the dull thunder might be heard. She did not answer; she was startled, was suspicious.

"Are we near the hotel, Mr. Redfield?"

"Nearer to heaven, nearer to bliss—Luly, Luly—listen to me, look at me! I have waited and watched for this; the moment has come, and I must tell you! I love you—love you tenderly, deeply, passionately,

madly! You are mine, mine, mine; to be loved forever, to love me tenderly, deeply, passionately, madly! —Is it not so? It is, it must be so, *it shall be so!*"

The clouds had grown darker and deeper, and the thunder now spoke plainly; the wind too swayed the trees; the heavy drops began to fall.

Fear now possessed her. What was it,—what did this man, once so gentle, mean? His low voice was intense and violent, it made her tremble—but not with love, not with love. She knew not what.

"Oh, Mr. Redfield, let me find my aunt quickly, quickly"—

"No, no, no!" he said intensely. "You are mine! I have sworn it, and I keep my vows. I love you to my inmost heart, and we will ride on forever, with love fanning us with his voluptuous wings."

He took her hand—she recovered it. He smiled grimly. He put his arm around her gently but firmly; —she resisted, forced him away, but he held her.—

She did not scream. "Mr. Redfield!"—she looked in his face, full and daring him—"is this gentlemanly? Do you forget yourself? Remember who you are, and *who I am!*"

He still smiled grimly.—

"I do, my Luly, I do. I *never forget, never forget.*"

The darkness came over them, the thunders rolled and the lightnings flashed, the rain came down, but still they drove on. It was a strange love-making.

"Mr. Redfield," she gasped, "leave me or kill me."

"No, no; I will love you and you shall love me." He still held her firmly in his strong arms.

"Never!" She was frantic; but he held her fast, and firm.

"You will, you will! You will ride with me forever. You *shall* be mine in love or in hate, which you will. You can never, never go back to that man I have sworn to punish. You ride with *me!* You cannot go back now if I were to loose you; you are disgraced; you are mine body and soul, mine forever?"

He laughed in a low voice; a bitter laugh it was, and it whispered no mercy to the heart of the girl. And still they rode on.

Luly was exhausted, she ceased her frantic struggles.

"Mr. Redfield, you are strong, I am weak; you are a man, I a girl, a child; have pity on me and kill me, or let me go?" She begged, she sobbed.—She was weak as a flower and terribly quiet. He removed his arms and she lay in the corner of her seat, cold with terror and wet with rain. She was exhausted and paralyzed.

"Mister Redfield," said the driver from his seat, "I can't see, and the horses are getting restive, and I think, sir, we've got off the road."

"Then stop!" said Redfield. Luly was quiet, completely exhausted. He jumped out to see about the road. Was she so utterly exhausted? In an instant the strength of despair came to her, she sprang from the accursed carriage like an antelope, and ran onward into the black darkness, reckless and desperate.

Chase was useless. Redfield was astounded; but he had struck his blow. Disgrace henceforth attached to

the name of Percival. He called and waited, but he dared not move; and by and by, when the stars shone out, he looked to find the body of the girl lying on the earth, exhausted—dead.

XLIV.

FAREWELL.

WHERE was Edward Percival, where Matilda Staunton?

After his interview with Mistress Mulloy, he had hastened to his counting-house to do what he must there, and then had made his way impatiently to his own house.

"Where is Miss Lucy?" he asked.

"Gone hout, sir"—

"Where is Mr. Percival?"

"Gone hout, sir"—

"Did they go together?"

"They 'ave, sir"—

"Were any gentlemen with them?"

"They were, sir"—

"Who were they?"

"They did not leave their names, sir"—

"Tobbots"—he spoke sternly—"were they Mr. Templeton and Mr. Redfield?"

"Them was the names, sir"—

Mr. Percival ground his teeth as he went up to his own room. He would bring matters to a crisis. Now

that he knew all, he would dare all and do all. What need of any further concealment or hesitation? "Society" would frown upon him, and would condemn him; let it! He cared nothing more for its smiles or frowns. Now he would do justly and try to walk humbly with God. He had found his daughter, he would devote his life to her henceforth; he would seek out the poor people whom he had ruined and disgraced, and would confess his sin and make all atonement which in this world is permitted. But where were they, and were any of them alive? He was impatient for the return of Luly and of Mrs. Percival. What a surprise to them and what a blow to Mrs. Percival? But what heeded he Mrs. Percival or her feelings? Justice now, justice though the heavens should fall. Luly should know all, must know her own and her father's shame in the eyes of the world; but she *was* his daughter indeed, and he would make her legally so before another sun should set. And then, with her he would leave the heartless crowd in which he had lived, and among whom his wife now found her only life, and would try to find in the quiet and loveliness of the country, security and peace.

What cared he longer for the opinion of the world? It was a Sodom apple filled with ashes.

The day waned and they did not return; the black clouds came up, and they did not come; the rain fell, and they did not come. He was devoured with impatience and unstrung with fears. What has happened? Where are they? Was the curse following them—and him?

When the bell rang, his heart closed up, and for a moment he forgot to breathe. He could not move; and yet his senses were alive. He heard a voice, and a step—it was but one. It came up slowly, dragging its weary weight—it approached his door; and then there stood before him, a pale, a wet, a wretched woman. It was his wife. She was pale and haggard and her lips were thin and trembling:—She stood before him—

"Where is she?" she gasped rather than spoke.

"Woman!"

"Oh, Edward!" most piteously she spoke.

"Woman!" His voice rose and harsher and harsher it sounded in her ears—"Woman! where is my child?"

"Oh, Edward!" Her fear was dreadful to see—"I never, never did it—do not look at me with such fearful eyes—I do not know—Oh, Edward! Edward!" She crept slowly toward him. He raised himself over her—

"Woman, you have killed her, and you have killed me! Touch me not! The curse is upon me, touch me no more. I hate you!"

His hand fell and he sank into his chair. She groaned and fell prone beside him.

This then was the end. Such misery it was permitted these two mortal creatures to work one another, such misery it was permitted them to endure. All was still, but she breathed, breathed slowly and heavily. His head was bowed and his eyes were dry and burning. Did some compunctious feeling visit his breast? He saw her, he raised her from the floor and laid her on a

couch. Then, stooping, he kissed her icy forehead and said as if to himself—

"Farewell!"

It was the last word he spoke in that house; but she, she heard it not.

XLV.

ON THE FLATS.

Away from the fateful city rushed the blasted man—whither he knew not. But some instinct, or some mysterious destiny, led him across the ferry where his child had crossed that morning in all her loveliness and youth; and onward through the wet and muddy roads he went, seeking in this fierce activity a relief from the fierce misery which drove him onward; to go—he knew not whither. Onward he hasted—whither? He knew not; only to seek and seek for this his child; so found, so lost, so beautiful, so wretched.

And was she dead, lying on the cold ground? And had she died in her agony, and not with blessed words on her lips, blessed thoughts in her heart? No, she had fled on into the darkness, while some angel led her so that she escaped the pit-falls and the dangers of the night;—some angel led her by the hand along the road until a ray of light struck her eye. She went toward it—for somewhere she must go—and it led her to a low house. Through the little window this single candle shone out—a beacon to the lonely girl driven by strange blasts over the sea of life.

Dared she knock?—dared she open the door? What

other dangers were in store for her! For where man was, there was danger, worse than all the elements—so she thought. But she approached the door; she listened; she heard a droning voice, reading perhaps—

"Which of—you, having—an ass or an—ox fallen into a—pit—and will not—straightway pull him out—on the—Sabbath-day?"—

"A dum pretty fellow he'd be if he wouldn't! Let me ketch a man leaving a critter in over Sabba-day, in a hole like that—I'd pitch *him* in, that's what I'd do,—eh, Nance?"

"Oh, you'se allus a talkin'; you'se a man, you is—read de book."

The door slowly opened, and Luly stood before them, white, and wet, and weary. Tom Bellows was speechless—old Nance held up her withered old hands—

"Laws-a-massy! whose dis a comin' out of de dark? Is you a gose?"

She saw that Luly was faint and like to fall, and then she cried:—

"Come in, chile—Mass'r Tom, help de chile!"

They put her into a chair.

The old woman felt of her. "Jes' as wet an' white as if she'd been bleachin' out on de wet grass two week. Git off dese, right away!"

She began to strip off her clothes regardless of Tom, and in a few minutes she had her dressed in such dry and warm garments as she could muster. But what amazement would have filled the souls of "society," could it have seen the transformation!—a belle changed to a beggar.

But Luly cared nothing for it. Slowly the currents of life began to flow, and the heart to beat, and the senses to act;—and then it overwhelmed her, the thought of her dear uncle;—what would he not suffer?—what would he not fear? She must go to him and at once, this was her only thought.

"You are a man," she said to Tom, "but would you hurt me?"

"Bless de chile!" said old Nance. "Massa Tom never hurt nobody—he hain't got spunk 'nuff to say nothing to a gal, he hain't—he, he, he!" She laughed feebly at her feeble joke.

Luly looked at Tom, and certainly *he* did not seem dangerous.

"I want to go to the city—will you carry me?"

"Why," said Tom, "its rainin' like thunder, don't you hear it?"

"I don't care for that, I'm not afraid of the thunder or the rain:—do carry me!—Oh, if you knew!"—but she stopped—she could not tell her dreadful tale.

She got her wet dress and found in it her pocket-book.

"Take it, all of it, only do carry me home—do carry me to my uncle!"

"Wal," said Tom, reflectively, "I could'nt take out the old hoss, not for no man's money. But seein' you are a gal, and hain't got nobody to git you round, I s'pose I must:—eh, Nance? I guess it'll slack-up in a few minutes, for there's a streak in the west"—looking out the door. "Wal, Nance, you give her something to eat, and as soon as it slacks-up, I'll get the old hoss in.

But it is the dumdest foolish thing I ever see—leaving a nice house and goin' off this kind o'night to a city." He went out with his lantern to see about his horse.—"It beats all natur, they can't stay out of 'em a single night. Now there's a nice room there, with as clean a bed as old Nance knows how to make, and yet she won't stay no how. It *is* cur'ous how the gals always runs away from me. Now I'd keep that nice young gal for nothing, if she'd stay; I would, I vow. But then dum it, I should be hankerin' to marry her—and she wouldn't, I know she wouldn't, not if I was to agree to give her all there is in the bank—the hull on't—into the bargain. It's the dumdest thing I ever see."

Indulging in such personal and moral reflections as these, Tom got his old horse harnessed into his two-seated wagon. Into it, wrapped in old Nance's Sunday shawl, Luly got, to take her ride. She grew more and more impatient, for it was getting late; she knew not how late, but what would not her uncle fear and suspect? Oh, what miseries men do bring to one anothher in this world, she thought! And then a shade of question crossed her soul—can God be good who permits such things? But she put it aside; why dream of such dreadful things?

"Could'nt you hurry him a little, just a little?" she asked softly of Tom as they jogged on.

"Mebby I could," said Tom, pulling the old fellow's mouth very gently;—"but you see there's difference in horses, there is; now old Dandy, he never likes to be hurried, he don't. I never knew how fast he could go—they're a talkin' round about their 2:40 hosses, but if

I was to bet, I'd bet that Dandy could beat the hull of 'em. 2:40! What deuced fools they must be to be wantin' to go tearin' over the ground that way! Why, I've seen 'em; and the hosses jest breathe like a bellus, they do. That's no way to drive a hoss;—a hoss knows how he wants to go a dum sight better than a man; that's nateral—God made 'em so. A hoss is a hoss and a man is a man, and this tryin' to make a man into a hoss is all dumd nonsense. I've seen these fellers tearin' along and hollerin' at their hosses like wild Injuns; do they suppose God A'mighty likes to hear that kind o' noise? Of all the critters I ever see, man beats the hull!"

"You would not be afraid of them if any should come, would you?" For now a fear began to creep over Luly, that perhaps Redfield and his man may yet be lying in wait, ready to pounce upon her.

Tom laughed a thick, low kind of chuckle:—"Fear'd of 'em! Let me ketch hold of one of 'em and I'd shake his innards into hasty-pudding, if he didn't behave; fear'd of 'em! ha, ha, ha!"

Luly was reassured by the defiant tone of her champion, and her mind reverted to her uncle. Should she venture a word about Dandy?

"He don't go *quite* so fast as he did, does he?"

"Oh, he'll get use to the dark in a minnit, and when he comes to that hill 'fore we strike the flats, you'll see he'll go like a streak. If I ever do train him, it'll be on that hill. He jest gets all mixed up there, and you'd think he had as many as fifty legs all a playin' in and out—up and down—this way and that way—and the

sparks fly, and the stones rattle, and the dogs bark, and by George, it'll take your breath clean away if you don't hold on to it!"—

Luly wished inwardly they could reach that hill, and that it might be a long one:—for now old Dandy hardly went over four miles the hour.

A new thought suggested itself to Tom's fertile mind.

"Now, I once had a dog—he was the most cur'ous and han'somest dog you ever see. This old hoss never knew that dog; there never was such a dog as that for vermin as ever I see. Any rat that see him, jest keeled over and giv' up. What was the use o' fightin' or runnin' away? 'twas all the same to Brit—and the rats knew jest what he'd do if he got hold on 'em, jest as well as if he'd writ it on a piece of paper and giv' it to 'em to read. Ah, that *was* a dog. But the dumdest thing was how he come to go off—jest follered a little un off to the city. Well he had a hankerin' after gals; jest like his master for that—but what's the use? It was ridic'lus for the dog to do that way, didn't do no kind o' good. No, if a gal wants you she'll come after you, that's my 'pinion; no use to go taggin' round after 'em:—the more you run after 'em the faster they'll run away, that's jest gals' natur. If I was to liv' my life over agin, I'd do very different from what I have done"—a heavy sigh. "No. I never quite forgiv' him for runnin' off, but if you *should* see that 'are dog round anywhere in York, yellerish-white with a spot over his eye, you have him took up and send me word, and I'll pay the damage, I will I vow! and I'll try to get you a pup of the same breed into the bargain."

So the good fellow ran on about his dog for a while, and the old horse trotted his even pace.

"Have we passed the hill?" asked Luly, finding they were on a flat expanse which stretched out in their front.

"Wal, we have. You didn't notice how like thunder Dandy went! Wal, I didn't myself; for *you* was talkin' so about the dog, that I never see when we got to it. If anybody ever begins to talk about that dog, I don't know how 'tis, I liked the critter so, that for a minnit or so I forget to eat my vittals. Wal, yes, here we are on the flats:—Go-long, Dandy!"

A dark figure was just visible on the line of the road, before them, which Luly's keen and anxious eyes saw at once:—was it, could it be Mr. Redfield? She wrapped herself close in old Nance's shawl and drew it around her face. The figure loomed larger in the vague darkness—her heart palpitated;—Tom chirruped to his horse and they trotted on. The figure neared them, and then a sharp bark struck their ears. The figure came on at a swinging pace; he was bare-headed, and took no heed of the mud or the pools that sprinkled the road; onward he went, regardless of all.

"By George! that 'are bark does sound cur'ous."—

They met, they passed; the figure rushed by without seeing them, and then the bark again struck their ears; it came from his companion.—

"By George! that 'are beats all!" Tom whistled and the dog wheeled about and came toward them.

"Who-o-o!"

Old Dandy came to a stand-still. An inspiration flashed into Luly's mind—

"Uncle, uncle!" she cried, and jumping from the wagon she ran to him. He never stopped. She caught him and held him fast. For a moment he looked at the strange figure in silence—

"Woman, woman! leave me lest I strike you dead!"

"O uncle, dear uncle, I am Luly; your own dear—dear Luly." She clasped her arms around him. He looked down into her face in the starry light, and then folding her in his arms he muttered—

"Thank God, thank God!"

There was silence for the space of a minute, as they two clasped one another in joy and thanksgiving.

He kissed her again and again—and again.

"Thank God, the blackness is past!"

"Oh, uncle, it is beautiful now!" Her loving mind refused to dwell upon that black past; she saw only the present joy; and hope again beckoned her on with a smile of peace.

"And, O uncle, where, where is my aunt?"

A shiver went through him as if pierced with a sword; Luly felt it, and it made her cold.

"My child, my dear and only child, henceforth you have no uncle and no aunt—I am your father! Cruel and unnatural, but your father who will love you alone from this time until the grave closes upon him. You have no aunt—*she is condemned!*"

Luly lay in his arms peaceful and trustful under the open sky. Why was it? Was it borne in upon her in all its fullness, that this blessedness was now hers, that now she had her "place," that now she *was sure of love?*—for the first time in her life was sure of it?

She lay in quiet and peace, and asked no more questions.

Another blessed meeting was taking place between Tom and Brit.—

"Wal, I vow! This beats all natur? Hain't forgot, have you? Goin' in now all over under, eh—to make up lost time? You *are* a pretty dog, ain't ye now? Ye think I'm goin' to take ye back jest the same? You dumd ongrateful cuss, givin' you vittal jest the same, eh?" All this time he was fondling the dog, and the dog, hoarse and grim as he was, was barking and devouring him; and thus there was union and peace between these two. But Tom came to his senses first.

"Well, stranger," he said, "you seem to have a hankerin' after gals anyway"—

"Oh, Tom, Tom," exclaimed Luly, "I am *so* happy! It's my, my—father—my dear, dear father that I've found."

"Oh"—said Tom; "that's all right. But it's the dumdest thing that ever I see. I never could put my arms round a little gal that way. Wal—now that you've found your father you won't want Tom and the old hoss no more I guess;—so we'll get along home. Come, Brit." The dog barked out his ready acquiescence.

"But Tom, dear Tom," said Luly, "you must not leave us;—we shall go with you."

"Jest as you say, jest as you say. Old Tom's hotel's allus open."

XLVI.

THE CURTAIN DROPS.

For the last time the curtain rises. In the low parlor of Sol Brigham's tavern was a father and daughter, they two alone. He was pale, and his thin grizzled hair, shading the sharp lines of his temples, told a story of suffering and sorrow. But he seemed calm and quiet. Luly was sitting by the open window looking out upon a country garden, and the morning-glorys were in bloom, and the bees were sucking their sweets. She was at peace. But with him all was not yet finished. He came and put his hand on her soft hair.

"I expect him here this morning;—

"Who, papa?"

"Mr. Eustis. I find that of all your dear mother's family he alone remains. While he does not know me nor I him, I have sent for him to meet a gentleman here this morning about a matter of business. I wish you to remain when he comes; for now, all that is left me, is to make what reparation I can in this world. You know all, Luly, and you do not hate me?"

She put her arms around his neck and kissed him, and then she kept his hand in hers;—that was her answer. Thus they stood by the open window in this lovely June morning.

"This way, Mr. Eustis, this way; they're in the best parlor." It was old Sol, showing in Mr. Eustis, who was now a man he deferred to. —— "This way"— a knock, and the door opened to admit Mr. Tom Eustis.

It is safe to say that three persons never met who were more astonished than these three;—they were aghast! The blood fled from their faces and their tongues were tied. Luly grasped Mr. Percival's arm—he was cold as ice. Mr. Eustis was mute and fierce—old Brigham was amazed. They looked at one another for a moment, no one spoke. At last Eustis said bitterly:—

"Edward Percival—is it not enough that you have brought ruin and disgrace upon me and mine, that you must now come here, here—here where Sarah Eustis listened to your falsehoods, and on this spot to insult the only friend she now has in this world! Is it not enough that—

"Hear me, hear me!" pleaded the repentant man.

"Why should you seek me?" went on Eustis. "Why should *I* hear you?—*I* who have sought you for years to wreak my vengeance upon you; have worked for it, and have plotted for it, and have failed—bitterly failed."

"Hear me! hear me!" pleaded Edward Percival.

"Why should I hear you? Have you brought her here, her too, to be a witness of the bitter evil you have done? Do you wish *her* to know the blackness of your heart? Do you wish to tell your own shame, and my shame, and the shame of my house in her ears?"

"Hear me, hear me!" pleaded Edward Percival.

"Oh! Mr. Redfield—hear him, hear him!" pleaded Luly. "I know all—all. Oh! hear him for my sake, for her sake, for your own sake!"

Her soft voice touched the hardened man;—he waited.

"Mr. Eustis, I need but few words. You can say nothing that I do not deserve. I admit all, all. I have sinned against you and yours. But Sarah Eustis is in heaven and her child is alive on earth. I came to beg in her name for mercy and forgiveness;—mercy for her and for myself. Spare her! spare her! She is so young, so innocent, so pure, so lovely. By the memory of Sarah Eustis, by the wrongs she suffered, I ask you to spare her dear child who now stands before you."

He dropped her hand, and Luly stood before him in all her beauty:—dared she look at this fearful man?—She advanced timidly. She looked into his face and saw the angel—she opened her arms and rushed toward him. He hesitated, he wavered—he fell upon his knees, he saw the dreadful deeds he had tried to do—he murmured, as he clasped her to his heart—"Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord."

Sol Brigham never told much of the sight he saw, but he did say—

"It beats all natur how much salt water there is inside a man. That's what *I* say—it beats all natur how much salt water's inside a man:—and it's all nonsense, too, all nonsense!—that's what *I* say."

The story is ended—and without solving the question which had perplexed all Milford—"whether Tom Eus-

tis was going to marry Squire Bostwick's daughter, and which one—the fat one or the parrot-toed one?"

Readers who are curious about it may depend upon receiving the earliest information by addressing "*Mr. Thom. White—Care of the Publishers.*"

What became of Mrs. Percival? My dear, why follow farther the fortunes of the wretched and forlorn? She did not die, more's the pity—not then. Consciousness came to her, and in the dreadful silence of that deserted house she waked to her own desolation. She dared not move, she dared not call, but she knew she was alone, deserted, cursed. She knew that Edward Percival, whom for so many years she had determined to make hers, to bind to her, body and soul, had fled from her as a leper. In the darkness of the wretched night, black waters swallowed up her soul. She could not weep, she could not pray, she could not bear her misery, and yet she lived; and the gray dawn shone in upon the once proud and majestic Matilda Staunton, a wreck. She roused herself, she sat up, she listened;—but no sounds came from her husband's room. She cried feebly—

"Edward!—Oh, Edward!"—but there was no reply;—then once more the fury of her grief seized her, and she uttered a cry and fainted.

We need not hate her, we need not curse her, we need not be like her. She had been a selfish woman, not a wicked one; and she had her reward. She had never had, never had tried to have the blessedness which

flows in, when loyal love flows out; and this was her misery.

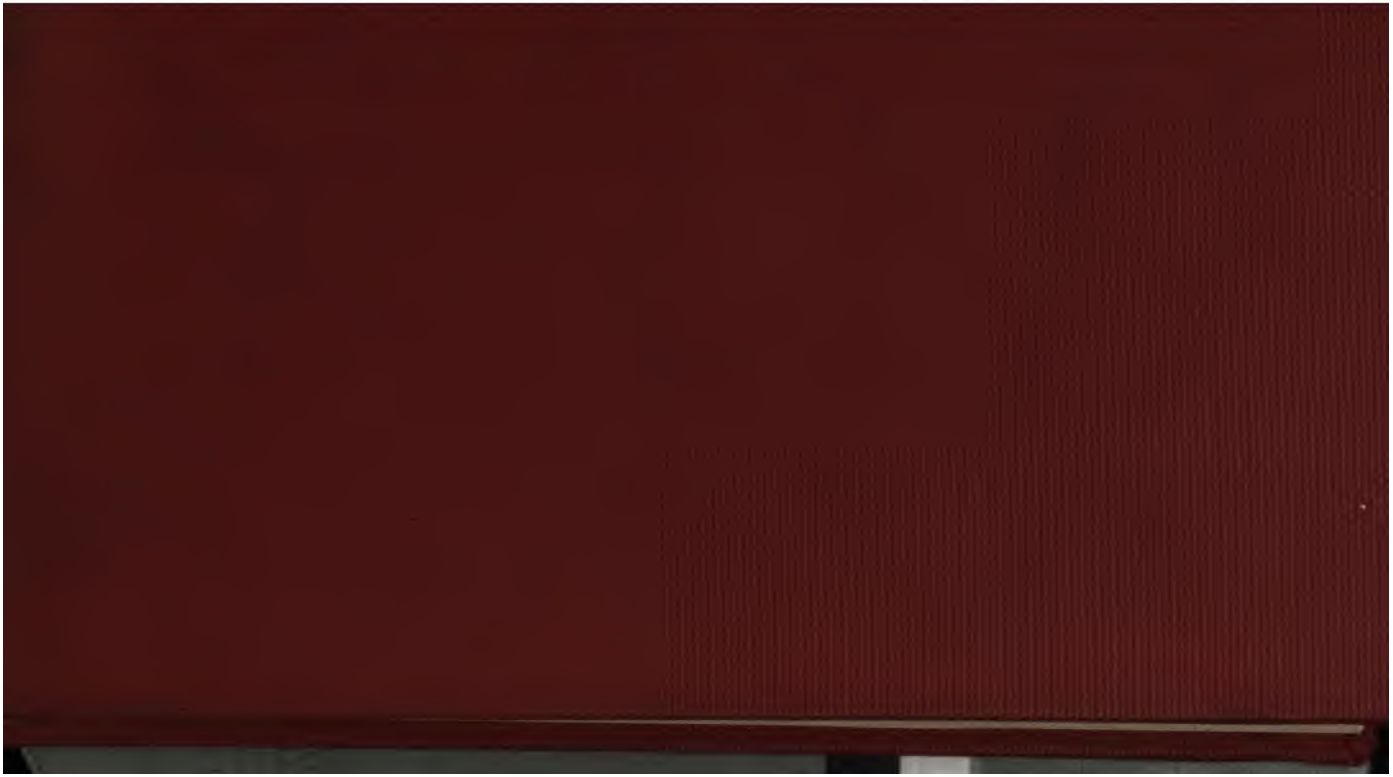
She never again passed the threshold of her house, never again hoped for anything in this world. She endured life for a year, and in that year let us hope that she had learned that it is more blessed to give than to receive;—let us also hope that on that "other side," the fire of God touched her soul, and that then she tasted of a happiness which she never tasted here; because there all is Love.

WIND AND WHIRLWIND

WILL BE FOLLOWED BY

HOPS AND HONEY.

JIMMYS ADVENTURES.

&c., &c.

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